

Theios Sophistes

ESSAYS ON
FLAVIUS PHILOSTRATUS'
VITA APOLLONII

Edited by

KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN
& DANNY PRAET

Theios Sophistes

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Essays on Flavius Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii*

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INTRODUCTION

“It may be that a philosopher’s life has found a writer equal to our ancestors’ days, but it is certain that it has found a reader worthy of my day.”¹ With this elegant flattery Sidonius Apollinaris presented to his friend, the courtier Leo, a Latin translation of the *Vita Apollonii*. That the praise for the intended reader went together with a certain scepticism towards the author of the *Life* can be called ominous for its future reception. Leo’s response to Sidonius, to Apollonius or to Philostratus is unknown to us, but through the ages numerous readers have responded to the *Life of Apollonius* in ways neither elegant nor flattering.

A few centuries later, Photius, for instance, made eager notes of rare words and exceptional phrases in the *Vita*, praising Philostratus for the sweetness and the charm of his style, but when it came to the contents of the book, he concluded his account in a rather less laudatory way: “On the subject of the Indians our author fabricates an entire series of ridiculous and implausible statements. (...) There is a great deal more nonsense like this, utterly stupid. In his eight books he wasted all his labour on empty effort”²

Another giant in the history of Classical philology displayed a similar mixture of appreciation and disdain. When Aldus Manutius produced the first printed edition of the Greek text of the VA, in 1501, he waited another three years before actually publishing the work, and the reluctant editor felt the need to warn possible clients in his personal preface: “I do not remember ever reading anything of lower quality or less deserving of attention.”³ As an editorial corroboration of this assessment and perhaps as a statement of his religious fervour, this friend of the late Pico Della Mirandola started the strange but ongoing tradition of editing the *Life* together with its refutation by Eusebius, which had to serve as a Christian antidote against Philostratus’ poisonous celebration of pagan wisdom.

¹ Sidonius Apollinaris, Letters VIII, 3, 6; Bowie 2006:142–143.

² Photius, Bibliotheca, codex 44, 10a. Translation from Wilson 2002:35. The linguistic and stylistic excerpts and remarks can be found in the much longer codex 241.

³ Lowry 1979:148.

In subsequent centuries, the *Vita Apollonii* was extensively studied, but almost exclusively to obtain information on historical subjects. It is no exaggeration to state that Philostratus was not appreciated as an author. His work was treated almost as an impediment to research on serious topics such as the historical Apollonius and the historical Jesus: the passing negative remarks, expressions of frustration and annoyance with Philostratus in modern scholarly literature would make for an interesting anthology. The papers collected in this volume do quote some of these remarks, but only to highlight the change in academic attitude towards Philostratus and his *Vita Apollonii*.

This change came about some 30 years ago with a number of landmark studies. The *Aufstieg und Niedergang* contribution by Ewen Bowie (1978) redirected historical research on the *Vita*. In 1981, the first study of the literary technique in the *Life* was undertaken by Thomas Knoles. Graham Anderson published the first monograph on Philostratus in 1986. Biblical *Redaktionsgeschichte* gave Erkki Koskenniemi (1991) another perspective to call upon scholars to read Philostratus as an author in his own right. From then on, an increasing number of scholars have produced new and appreciative studies on the VA. Without abandoning the historical, religious and source-critical discussions, recent research has broadened the approaches to what we now would call a literary masterpiece. This methodological shift has been articulated and discussed by James Francis (Francis 1998), who addresses the issue of the VA's famously problematic relation between fictionality and historicity; he transcends the traditional either/or-discussions by posing the question what kind of "fictional contract" the VA implies and how the text functions as "truthful fiction".

In the last decade a more general Philostratus revival seems to have been taking place, no doubt closely connected with the growing fascination and appreciation for the Second Sophistic as a whole, for which Philostratus' *Vitae Sophistarum* is an important source (see for example Flinterman 1995 and Whitmarsh 2001). A sure sign of the renewed interest in the VA is the publication in 2005 of a new translation and edition in the Loeb Classical Library by Christopher Jones. Also in 2005, Thomas Schirren published his monograph on the *Vita Apollonii*, in which the application of new methodologies yielded an innovative reading of the VA as an ironic text. The benefits of a narratological approach are demonstrated by Tim Whitmarsh in the chapters on Philostratus in the first two volumes of the Brill *Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative* (de Jong 2005 and 2007).

The other works in the *Corpus Philostrateum* also benefited from the renewed interest in Philostratus (see e.g. Billault 2000). The first English translation of the *Heroicus* was published in 2001 (Maclean & Aitken), followed by a volume of collected essays (Aitken & Maclean 2004), and a new commentary (Grossardt 2006). The bibliography on the *Imagines* has grown tremendously in recent years (see for example Elsner 2000b and Webb 2006b), and even the long neglected *Love Letters* are finally attracting scholarly attention (Rosenmeyer 2001; Hodkinson 2007; Goldhill forthcoming).

The *Life of Apollonius* is now generally seen not only as Philostratus' *magnum opus*, but also as a key text in the cultural, literary and religious history of imperial Greece. Its generic and formal diversity, its shifting cultural and historical background, as well as its protean hero, clearly call for a multifaceted and interdisciplinary reading.

An awareness of this need for an interdisciplinary approach brought together a number of Ghent scholars with backgrounds in literary, philosophical and religious studies and, in 2003, the undersigned and their colleague Marc Van Uytvanghe obtained a research grant from the Belgian Research Foundation—Flanders. The project, labelled “*The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* by Flavius Philostratus. Literary allusions and compositional unity; literary play and ideological earnestness”, enabled the Classics Department of Ghent University to engage a PhD student, Wannes Gyselinck, as a full-time research fellow and to invite post-doctoral fellows Stelios Panayotakis (2005) and Graeme Miles (2007). As the four year project was at its mid-term, the participants in the project, together with our Leuven colleague Luc Van der Stockt, organized a round-table conference at the Royal Academy in Brussels, on 19 and 20 January 2006, under the title “Flavius Philostratus’ *Vita Apollonii*—Text and Contexts”. Much to our pleasure and gratitude, most of the scholars responsible for the Philostratean revival since the 1980s agreed to participate, along with younger students of the VA and established scholars of related fields. The meeting was both stimulating and agreeable, and constituted a landmark in our research project.

The present book has its origin in this Brussels conference. Most of the chapters in this book are revised versions of papers given at the conference, while three others (Graham Anderson, Graeme Miles, and Peter Grossardt) were written for the occasion. The busy schedules of other scholars prevented them both from attending the conference and from submitting papers for the present volume.

The volume comprises extensions and round-ups of more traditional approaches to the text, as well as essays in which recent critical developments are taken a step further. In general, we can say that this volume represents critical advances in a variety of domains. Firstly, new connections are explored between the VA and other texts or traditions: with the letters of Apollonius (Jones), Plutarch (Van der Stockt), folkloric traditions (Anderson), Eusebius' *Contra Hieroclem* (Schirren), the post-Homeric traditions including Lucian's *Verae Historiae* and Philostratus' *Heroicus* (Grossardt), even Greek literature as a whole (Bowie). Secondly, the text's religious and philosophical background is further charted, by embedding the VA in the hagiographic tradition (Van Uytfanghe), exploring the philosophical subtext (Praet), relating the *Vita* to the Emesan Sun-cult (Morgan) or the Cretan cult of Dictynna (Flinterman). Thirdly, the volume presents essays looking at the VA from new angles, and experimenting with innovatory methodologies. The application of modern literary theory has produced surprising new insights, or at least a fresh look at old problems (Billault; Schirren; Gyselinck-Demoen; Miles). And lastly, many of the essays offer interesting interpretations and discussions of particular episodes and passages in the VA.

The articles have been organized in two sections, corresponding roughly to the two oxymoronically collocated words in the title of the book. The first section focuses on literary and philological discussions, the second section deals with historical, religious and philosophical aspects. For some of the articles this distinction is of course rather arbitrary, because of the evident interconnection between the two covered fields.

The first section starts off with an essay by ALAIN BILLAULT, *Les choix narratifs de Philostrate dans la Vie d'Apollonios de Tyana*, which places the VA firmly within the biographical tradition, and brings out Philostratus' originality vis-à-vis this tradition. This originality results, among other things, from the introduction of a meta-biographical discourse, in which Philostratus throughout the *Life* reflects on the narration of an exceptional life and makes explicit the motivations underlying his choices.

In the contribution of GERARD BOTER, *Towards a new critical edition of Philostratus' Life of Apollonius: the affiliation of the manuscripts*, we can catch a glimpse of the new *editio critica maior* he is preparing; a new *stemma codicum* is presented for the first time.

EWEN BOWIE introduces his contribution, *Quotation of earlier texts in Τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον*, as a sample of how the research on

quotations and allusions in the VA might be conducted. He not only provides two useful inventories, but also draws attention to the distribution of quotations over the 8 books, and to the range of authors who are cited.

How to become a poet? Homer and Apollonius visit the mound of Achilles, by PETER GROSSARDT, explores the literary and historical traditions that might have informed the VA episode near Troy. Apollonius' cross-examination of the Achaean hero is placed against the background of playful Homer-correction typical for the literature of the Second Sophistic.

In *Author and narrator: fiction and metafiction in Philostratus' Vita Apollonii*, WANNES GYSELINCK and KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN look at the VA from a narratological point of view and argue for the need to distinguish between the author, who is responsible for the sophistic *écriture*, and the narrating voice. The author is shown to communicate tacitly with his (sophisticated) reader, and to create an effect that in contemporary critical terms might be described as metafictional.

In *Reforming the eyes: interpreters and interpretation in the Vita Apollonii*, GRAEME MILES examines the interpretive theories and representations of interpretation in the VA, focussing both on the representation of Apollonius as interpreter and on some interesting passages in the VA where interpretation is explicitly reflected upon by the protagonists. Miles suggests an "Apollonian" reading of the VA, in which the represented ideas on interpretation are used as cues to approach the text itself.

THOMAS SCHIRREN's *Irony versus eulogy. The Vita Apollonii as meta-biographical fiction*, argues that the VA can function as a eulogy, as it was commissioned by Julia Domna, but at the same time invites a reading that recognizes ironic ambiguities, and prompts the sophisticated reader to reflect on the representation of holy men in general. This essay also offers an ingenious interpretation of the only extant ancient reader-response, the polemic treatise by the Christian intellectual Eusebius.

In "*Never the twain shall meet?*" *Plutarch and Philostratus' Life of Apollonius: some themes and techniques*, LUC VAN DER STOCKT provides a detailed rhetorical analysis of the important prologue of the VA and explores the connections and differences between Plutarch and Philostratus, paying particular attention to Plutarch's biography of the Pythagorean Numa.

The second section opens with an essay by GRAHAM ANDERSON, *Folklore versus fakelore: some problems in the Life of Apollonius*, in which he explores connections between the VA and folklore, scratching off the sophistic veneer in search of folkloric motives.

JAAP-JAN FLINTERMAN's article, *Apollonius' ascension*, focuses on the question why Apollonius' ascension is situated precisely in the temple of Dictynna on Crete, bringing into account both literary and archaeological evidence. Flinterman points out some curious parallels between the account of Apollonius' death and afterlife, and the mythology surrounding the Cretan cult.

CHRISTOPHER JONES offers in his contribution, *Some letters of Apollonius of Tyana*, a subtle argument, based on the corpus of letters attributed to Apollonius, suggesting that the historical Apollonius may be attested in an Ephesian inscription as "Lucius Pompeius Apollonius". This would imply Apollonius' Roman citizenship.

In *The Emesan connection: Philostratus and Heliodorus*, JOHN MORGAN discusses the Emesan background shared by Philostratus' VA and Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. He argues that the Emesan Sun-cult is an essential background element to both. Morgan shows how both texts use fictional constructions of idealized solar states at the margins of the world as a displaced means to articulate a message about the Emesan cult. Morgan's examination moreover throws an interesting light on the question of the date of Heliodorus' novel.

In *Pythagoreanism and the planetary deities: the philosophical and literary master-structure of the Vita Apollonii*, DANNY PRAET argues that incarnation and the ascension of the soul through the planetary spheres underlie Philostratus' distribution of the different themes and episodes over the VA's eight books. Praet's reading entails an assessment of the VA as a serious and unique, albeit sophistically encoded, philosophical text.

ERKKI KOSKENNIEMI's *The Philostratean Apollonius as a teacher* is a thematic inquiry about the way Apollonius is represented as a teacher in the VA.

The book concludes with an essay by MARC VAN UYTFANGHE, *La Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane et le discours hagiographique*. He offers a comprehensive *status quaestionis* of the investigations of parallels between the gospels and the VA, and of the question of the *theios aner*.⁴ The VA is meaningfully positioned within the broader framework of the

⁴ A recent *status quaestionis* or a full history of the VA-Forschung are readily available in some recent studies quoted in several articles. We may refer notably to Flinterman 1995 and Schirren 2005.

'hagiographical discourse' which brings together the pagan, Christian and Jewish traditions.

The book is completed by an integrated bibliography and two *indices* (*locorum* and general), intended to render this volume of collected papers useful as a reference work.

On behalf of the organizers, the participants and the guests, we would like to thank the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts, and the University Foundation Belgium for hosting the conference and offering financial support, and the Research Foundation—Flanders, for generously supporting the research project in general and the conference in particular. As editors of the volume, we would like to thank all the contributors for their loyal cooperation. Wannes Gyselinck did a great job as assistant editor, as did Marjolein De Wilde for the technical parts of the text editing. At the final stage of the editorial process, Graeme Miles assisted us with copy editing and revision of the English style of several texts.

We hope this book will help find readers of the *Vita Apollonii* worthy of our days.

Ghent, April 2008
Kristoffel Demoen & Danny Praet

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PART ONE

LITERARY AND PHILOLOGICAL ASPECTS

LES CHOIX NARRATIFS DE PHILOSTRATE DANS LA VIE D'APOLLONIOS DE TYANE

ALAIN BILLAULT

Quand, au III^{ème} siècle de notre ère, Philostrate écrit la *Vie d'Apollonios de Tyane*, la biographie grecque a plus de cinq cents ans d'âge. Même si ses origines nous sont mal connues, nous savons en effet qu'elle remonte au moins au IV^{ème} siècle av. J.C. et qu'à partir de cette époque, elle ne connaît pas d'éclipse.¹ Il est donc légitime de se demander ce que Philostrate doit à la tradition déjà longue du genre qu'il aborde à son tour. A cette question, l'on doit répondre que, sans épouser toutes les conventions du genre ni les rejeter, il en reprend un certain nombre et les adapte à sa manière en opérant des innovations qu'il estime appropriées à la réalisation de son projet.

Celui-ci lui a été confié, comme il le raconte au début de son récit, par l'impératrice Julia Domna. Elle l'a chargé de mettre en forme les « mémoires », τῶν ὑπομνημάτων (I 3), d'un compagnon d'Apollonios de Tyane, Damis, dont un parent lui avait fait connaître le texte. Philostrate s'est acquitté de cette mission tout en l'élargissant. Il précise, en effet, qu'il a mené lui-même des recherches sur Apollonios dans les cités où on l'aimait, dans les sanctuaires dont il avait restauré les règles, qu'il a recueilli les propos que d'autres gens encore tenaient sur cet homme, qu'il a lu ses lettres et d'autres livres qui lui sont consacrés.² Ces diverses enquêtes lui ont servi à composer son ouvrage dans une double intention qu'il annonce sans détour :

Que mon ouvrage fasse honneur à l'homme qui en est le sujet et soit utile à ceux qui aiment apprendre, car ils pourraient bien apprendre ce qu'ils ne savent pas encore (I 3).³

Philostrate a donc voulu composer un éloge d'Apollonios de Tyane et le faire connaître au public cultivé. Pour réaliser ce programme encomiastique et historique, il a choisi de raconter la vie d'Apollonios

¹ Pour un point sur la question, voir Momigliano 1971.

² I 1.2; I 2.3, I, 3.2. Pour un point sur les sources de Philostrate, voir Flinterman 1995:67-88.

³ Je cite et je traduis le texte de l'édition de Jones 2005.

dans sa totalité, à la différence de ceux qui isolent telle ou telle de ses actions pour en faire l'éloge (I 2), et de placer son récit sous le signe de la précision chronologique et de la rigueur thématique :

Ma décision est de ne pas laisser sans remède l'ignorance de la plupart des gens, mais de donner de cet homme une image exacte au point de vue de la chronologie de ses paroles et de ses actes et des modalités de sa sagesse qui lui ont permis d'être considéré comme un être surnaturel et divin... (I 2).

Philostrate entend donc écrire à la gloire d'Apollonios un récit exact, ἐξακριβῶσαι τὸν ἄνδρα, en suivant simultanément deux orientations : d'une part, la relation de ses discours et de ses actions tels qu'ils se sont succédés dans le temps, d'autre part, la mise en relief des formes singulières de sa sagesse qui lui ont valu sa réputation d'homme divin. La réalisation de ce programme encomiastique, historique et philosophique constitue son projet d'écrivain comme le montre, d'ailleurs, le commentaire dont Philostrate l'accompagne. Elle implique un certain nombre de choix narratifs dont l'étude peut aider à prendre la mesure de son art de biographe considéré dans ses principes, mais aussi, et surtout, dans son exécution.⁴ Philostrate, en effet, était moins un théoricien de la biographie qu'un praticien de ce genre littéraire sur lequel il a apposé sa marque personnelle.

En choisissant d'écrire son récit à la gloire d'Apollonios de Tyane, Philostrate s'inscrit dans la tradition encomiastique de la biographie. C'est la tradition dominante. En Grèce, on raconte bien moins souvent la vie d'un homme pour le dénigrer que pour faire son éloge. Le pamphlet écrit par Stésimbrotos de Thasos contre Thémistocle, Thucydide fils de Mélésias et Périclès quelques années, sans doute, après la mort de ce dernier,⁵ celui d'Antisthène contre les politiciens athéniens du IV^{ème} siècle av. J.C.,⁶ les allégations diffamatoires proférées, au siècle suivant, contre Socrate et contre Platon par Aristoxène de Tarente dans ses biographies de Pythagore et du fondateur de l'Académie⁷ et, bien plus tard, au II^{ème} siècle de notre ère, les deux biographies polémiques de

⁴ Pour une application des théories narratologiques modernes à la littérature grecque antique, voir de Jong 2004 et 2007, avec notamment les chapitres sur Philostrate de T. Whitmarsh.

⁵ Momigliano 1971:30–32.

⁶ Momigliano 1971:48.

⁷ Momigliano 1971:74–76; Schirren 2005:96–98.

Lucien, *Alexandre ou le faux prophète* et *La mort de Pérégrinos*, relèvent d'un courant minoritaire dans l'écriture biographique.

Celle-ci est influencée, dès l'origine, par la rhétorique de l'éloge.⁸ Dans ce domaine, Gorgias semble avoir joué un rôle prédominant. Lorsque, dans le *Banquet* de Platon, Agathon prononce, après d'autres convives, l'éloge d'Eros (194e4–197e8), Socrate y reconnaît aussitôt avec ironie l'influence du sophiste sicilien :

En effet, ce discours me rappelait Gorgias, si bien que j'éprouvais véritablement ce que dit Homère : j'avais peur qu'à la fin Agathon n'envoie à destination de mon discours une tête de Gorgias, un virtuose du discours, et ne me transforme en pierre en me rendant muet (198c).⁹

Socrate joue sur deux noms. La tête de Gorgias qu'il craignait de voir apparaître à la fin du discours d'Agathon et qui, en le pétrifiant dans le mutisme, l'aurait empêché de prononcer à son tour l'éloge du dieu, est censée remplacer, avec les mêmes effets qu'elle, la tête de Gorgone que, dans l'*Odyssée* (11.633–635), Ulysse craint de voir apparaître, envoyée par Perséphone, à la surface de la fosse où il interroge les morts. Par cette plaisanterie, Socrate évoque l'influence intimidante de la rhétorique gorgianique de l'éloge dont Agathon est un adepte talentueux et qui consiste, selon le philosophe, à consacrer au sujet qu'on célèbre les paroles les plus impressionnantes et les plus belles, qu'elles soient ou non conformes à la vérité (198d–e). Socrate ne saurait rivaliser avec cette rhétorique indifférente au vrai. La tête de Gorgias le laisserait muet. En revanche, la rhétorique de Gorgias inspire à Agathon un discours brillant ordonné selon un plan simple et qu'il annonce dès le début comme conforme à la nature même de l'éloge : il parlera d'abord des qualités du dieu, puis des dons qu'il fait aux hommes (195a1–5). Il présente ce plan comme une forme de codification de l'éloge. Il énumère les vertus d'Eros, équité, maîtrise de soi, courage, sagesse, dans un ordre qui avait peut-être été fixé par Gorgias. Celui-ci avait, en effet, si l'on en croit Aristote (*Pol.* 1260a27–28), dressé une liste des vertus à célébrer dans un éloge. L'éloge d'Eros par Agathon présente, d'autre part, un aspect ludique adapté à la circonstance où il est prononcé et qui porte aussi la marque de Gorgias. Ce dernier qualifie lui-même son *Eloge d'Hélène* de « jeu », παίγνιον (Fr. 11, 21). En bon disciple, Agathon précise à la fin que son éloge d'Eros relève « en partie du jeu et en partie d'un sérieux

⁸ Sur ce sujet, voir Pernot 1993.

⁹ Je traduis le texte de l'édition de Dover 1980.

mesuré» τὰ μὲν παιδιᾶς, τὰ δὲ σπουδῆς μετρίας...μετέχων (197e7). Il subit donc l'influence de Gorgias. Son éloquence témoigne de la théorie et de la pratique de l'éloge élaborées par le sophiste sicilien. La réflexion sur l'éloquence encomiastique se poursuit d'ailleurs pendant toute l'époque classique. On trouve un de ses points d'aboutissement dans la *Rhétorique à Alexandre*.

Ce traité fut longtemps, et à tort, attribué à Aristote.¹⁰ Composé dans la seconde moitié du IV^{ème} siècle av. J.C., il contient, au chapitre 35, un exposé détaillé du plan que doit suivre l'orateur qui veut composer l'éloge de quelqu'un (35, 1440b): il doit, dit l'auteur, célébrer d'abord « ses qualités extérieures à la vertu », τὰ μὲν οὖν ἔξω τῆς ἀρετῆς, c'est-à-dire sa famille, sa force, sa beauté, sa richesse, puis sa vertu personnelle sous ses différents aspects, sagesse, équité, courage, conduites honorables. Pour les premières, il le déclarera bienheureux, pour la seconde, il fera son éloge. L'auteur entre ensuite dans les détails en consacrant la majeure partie de ses conseils au traitement de la généalogie du personnage loué par l'orateur (1140b23–1441a14). Cette insistance mérite de retenir l'attention car elle coïncide avec celle qu'on trouve à la même époque dans les premières biographies complètes que nous ayons conservées.

Elles sont dues à Isocrate et à Xénophon. Le premier est un prosateur qui fut aussi le plus illustre maître de rhétorique de son temps. Son cas constitue la meilleure illustration du lien originel entre la biographie et la rhétorique de l'éloge. Dans son plaidoyer *Sur l'attelage* qu'il composa en 396–395 pour le fils d'Alcibiade, il inclut une biographie encomiastique de l'homme d'Etat athénien (25–41), louant successivement sa naissance, son éducation, sa conduite dans l'armée, son mariage, sa victoire aux Jeux Olympiques et son activité politique. Un peu plus tard, composant l'*Eloge d'Hélène*, il est conduit à faire aussi celui de Thésée (18–37) en écrivant une biographie du héros dont l'excellence est censée rejaillir sur la femme qu'il avait voulu enlever alors qu'elle n'était encore qu'une enfant. Il célèbre donc les exploits de Thésée, sa piété et ses bienfaits à l'égard d'Athènes qu'il fonda comme cité et dont il fut un roi juste et aimé. A ces deux biographies insérées dans des discours traitant d'autres sujets, Isocrate fit succéder, vers 365 av. J.C., une biographie encomiastique d'un grand homme, la première du genre, et qui constitue la totalité d'un discours, l'*Elogos*, éloge funèbre du roi de Chypre composé pour son fils Nicoclès

¹⁰ Voir l'édition de Chiron 2002:XL–CVII.

qui était élève d'Isocrate et qui devait, à son tour, régner sur l'île. Dès le début, Isocrate précise ses intentions : il veut « *faire l'éloge de la vertu d'un homme par un discours* » (8), entreprise dont il souligne la difficulté (1–11) avant de l'aborder selon un plan méthodique qui le conduit à évoquer successivement les ancêtres d'Evagoras (12–18), l'histoire de Salamine de Chypre jusqu'à son règne (19–21), les vertus qu'il a montrées dans son enfance et à l'âge adulte (22–25), sa carrière (26–32), son courage et sa grandeur (33–34), les dangers qu'il a dû affronter (35–38), ses vertus morales et politiques (39–46), ses bienfaits à l'égard de Salamine de Chypre (47–57), ses exploits contre les Perses (57–69) et le bonheur qu'il a connu pendant toute sa vie (70–72). En conclusion, Isocrate réaffirme la légitimité de son entreprise et adresse une exhortation à Nicoclès (73–81). Son éloge funèbre d'Evagoras constitue, en fait, la première biographie encomiastique en prose d'un grand homme. Il la compose selon un plan semblable, sur certains points, à celui que préconise l'auteur de la *Rhétorique à Alexandre*. Il célèbre ainsi la famille et la patrie d'Evagoras avant de louer ses vertus personnelles. Mais le récit de sa carrière s'accompagne de considérations sur les qualités que dénotait sa conduite dans diverses circonstances. Cette alternance entre narration historique et synthèse éthique est la réponse donnée par Isocrate à la double exigence inhérente à la biographie encomiastique qui doit être à la fois un récit et un éloge. Xénophon y répond d'une autre manière.

Il était l'ami du roi de Sparte Agésilas. Peu après la mort de ce dernier survenue en 358 av. J.C., il compose l'*Agésilas* à sa gloire. Il commence lui aussi par célébrer sa famille avant de conter ses exploits (I–II), puis il loue longuement ses vertus (III–IX). Dans l'épilogue (X), il fait un éloge conjoint de ses exploits et de ses vertus et termine en récapitulant ces dernières (XI). A la différence d'Isocrate, il sépare donc nettement le récit historique et le portrait moral de son personnage. Il énumère les vertus d'Agésilas dans l'ordre adopté par Agathon pour celles d'Eros dans le *Banquet*, mais il établit une liste plus longue et l'accompagne d'analyses. Il crée ainsi un grand déséquilibre entre les deux parties de son ouvrage. La seconde, consacrée aux vertus, est bien plus longue que la première où le récit historique paraît d'autant plus bref qu'il concerne une carrière très longue, puisqu'Agésilas régna pendant quarante ans. L'*Agésilas* est donc une oeuvre asymétrique où la célébration du personnage prend le pas sur celle de ses actes. La réponse de Xénophon aux deux impératifs de la biographie encomiastique diffère donc beaucoup de celle d'Isocrate. Avec les différences qui les séparent, l'*Agésilas* et l'*Evagoras* apparaissent ainsi comme emblématiques de deux façons

d'écrire la vie d'un homme. Comment situer la *Vie d'Apollonios de Tyane* par rapport à elles ?

Comme Isocrate et Xénophon et conformément aux préceptes de la *Rhétorique à Alexandre*, Philostrate commence par célébrer la noble naissance de son personnage, mais comme il attribue à ce dernier une triple ascendance philosophique, divine et humaine, il donne à son éloge une forme originale. Il évoque d'abord, en effet, Pythagore, sa manière de vivre et d'honorer les dieux, sa doctrine (I 1) avant d'en venir à celles, fort semblables, d'Apollonios (I 2). Il en vient ensuite à la naissance de ce dernier. Mentionnant la noblesse et la richesse de sa famille, il insiste surtout sur les nombreux signes divins qui accompagnent sa venue au monde : Protée apparaît à sa mère pour la prévenir que c'est à lui-même qu'elle va donner naissance (I 4), prophétie qui annonce la sagesse d'Apollonios et les mille formes que va prendre sa vie. Sa mère est délivrée sur une prairie où elle s'était endormie. Elle était venue y cueillir des fleurs avec ses amies sur l'ordre d'un songe analogue à celui par lequel Athéna, dans l'*Odyssée* (6.25–40), commande à Nausicaa d'aller faire la lessive à l'endroit où elle va rencontrer Ulysse. Elle est réveillée en sursaut par le chant d'un chœur de cygnes assemblés comme pour la naissance d'Apollon¹¹ et, au moment où naît son fils, la foudre descend du ciel, puis y remonte sans avoir touché la terre, présage d'un destin surnaturel et qui fait dire aux gens du pays qu'Apollonios était fils de Zeus, affirmation qu'il ne reprenait pas lui-même à son compte (I 5–6). Cette surdétermination divine qui marque sa naissance n'en signifie pas moins qu'il n'appartient pas tout à fait et pas seulement au monde des hommes. Philostrate associe avec habileté les trois généalogies dont il relève. Sa généalogie pythagoricienne sera illustrée par sa doctrine et sa manière de vivre. Sa généalogie humaine le situe au sommet de l'aristocratie cappadocienne. Et sa généalogie divine, imprécise à force de signes, n'en est pas moins certaine et le place au-dessus du commun des mortels. C'est pourtant parmi ces derniers qu'il va vivre. Faire un récit exact de cette vie constitue le projet historique de Philostrate.

Sur le plan historique, une biographie consiste, selon la définition d'A. Momigliano,¹² en un récit de la vie d'un homme de sa naissance jusqu'à sa mort. La *Vie d'Apollonios de Tyane* correspond à cette définition. Pour

¹¹ Voir Callimaque, *Hymne à Délos*, 249–255.

¹² Momigliano 1971:11.

raconter la vie de son héros, Philostrate choisit, en effet, de composer un récit chronologique. Refusant la séparation de l'histoire et de l'éthique opérée par Xénophon, il se range du côté d'Isocrate. Il relate, comme lui, l'enfance et la jeunesse de son personnage et souligne les qualités qu'elles révèlent (I 7-12). Cependant, il opte pour une narration plus linéaire, sans adopter l'alternance entre relation événementielle et synthèse morale qu'on trouve dans l'*Evagoras*. Il suit donc Apollonios de sa naissance jusqu'à sa mort comme Plutarque suit ses héros dans les *Vies parallèles*. Mais si Plutarque écrit les *Vies* pour l'édification morale de ses lecteurs et pour la sienne propre,¹³ il ne les conçoit jamais comme des éloges systématiques. Philostrate ne peut donc passer pour son héritier sur le plan encomiastique. En revanche, sur le plan narratif, on peut rapprocher son récit des siens.

Comme Plutarque, Philostrate doit résoudre les difficultés inhérentes au projet d'écrire la vie d'un homme. Mener à bien un tel récit n'est pas une entreprise simple. D'abord, il ne saurait être complet. Aucun biographe ne pourra jamais relater tout ce qu'un homme a vécu. La biographie est par nature lacunaire.¹⁴ Cependant, elle ne s'en trouve pas moins souvent menacée par un excès de matière. Même si le biographe ne peut pas tout dire de son personnage, il lui est fréquemment impossible de raconter tout ce qu'il a appris sur lui. Cette impossibilité peut être matérielle, lorsque la masse d'informations accumulée nécessiterait un récit démesuré. Elle peut aussi relever de l'art, quand l'auteur comprend qu'il risque d'ensevelir son personnage sous la relation exhaustive des faits innombrables qu'il a reconstitués et que celle-ci s'avère donc contraire au but qu'il poursuit. Au début de sa *Vie d'Alexandre*, Plutarque expose cette difficulté et la manière qu'il a choisie pour la résoudre. Refusant de faire le récit complet des actions d'Alexandre et de César qu'il lui associe, il justifie ainsi sa décision :

En effet, ce ne sont pas des histoires que nous écrivons, mais des vies et ce n'est pas dans les actions les plus éclatantes que se montre dans tous les cas la vertu et le vice, mais souvent un petit fait, une parole, une plaisanterie révèlent un caractère plus que des combats où tombent des milliers d'hommes, les batailles rangées et les sièges des villes les plus importantes (*Alexandre* 1, 2-3).

¹³ Cf. *Périclès* 1-2, *Timoléon* 1.

¹⁴ Momigliano 1971:11-12.

Revendiquant d'être, comme les peintres, attentif aux « signes distinctifs de l'âme », il déclare laisser à d'autres « les grands événements et les affrontements. » Son refus d'une histoire militaire complète ne saurait trouver d'écho chez Philostrate dont le héros n'est pas un grand capitaine. En revanche, sa volonté de saisir le caractère de ses personnages et la méthode qu'il a choisi de suivre pour y parvenir peuvent donner à penser au lecteur de la *Vie d'Apollonios de Tyane*. Philostrate veut dire toute la vérité sur Apollonios et critique ceux qui se bornent à mettre en valeur seulement certains épisodes de sa vie (I 2). Son optique n'est donc pas exclusivement morale, comme celle de Plutarque, et se veut globale, alors que celle de Plutarque est sélective. Mais sur ce dernier point, la différence entre les deux auteurs s'avère moins grande qu'on pourrait le croire *a priori*. Plutarque ne peut ni ne veut tout dire sur Alexandre et sur César. Il choisit donc dans leur vie les épisodes qui lui semblent révélateurs de leur caractère. Il applique le principe *pars pro toto* qui est le lot de tous les biographes. Philostrate s'y conforme aussi à sa manière.

A l'en croire, Apollonios a vécu pendant la majeure partie du I^{er} siècle de notre ère.¹⁵ Le récit d'une vie aussi longue était menacé par la démesure et par la confusion pour cause de surabondance de matière. Philostrate parvient à conjurer ces deux périls en opérant une sélection à partir des mémoires de Damis. Que ces mémoires aient ou non existé importe moins pour notre propos que la manière dont Philostrate s'y réfère. Il présente Damis comme un témoin fiable, auteur d'un document visant à l'exhaustivité :

La langue de l'Assyrien était médiocre, car il lui manquait l'élégance du style parce qu'il avait été éduqué chez les barbares, mais consigner par écrit un discours ou une conversation, rendre ce qu'il avait entendu ou vu et composer un compte rendu des faits de ce genre, il en était tout à fait capable et il s'employait à cette tâche le mieux du monde. En tout cas le recueil de miettes de Damis répondait à cette intention. Damis voulait que rien de ce qui concernait Apollonios ne fût ignoré, mais que même les remarques qu'il faisait ou les propos qu'il tenait en passant fussent consignés par écrit. Et, en vérité, il vaut la peine de citer sa réponse à celui qui décriait cette activité : comme un individu paresseux et médisant le critiquait et déclarait qu'il avait raison, d'un côté, de consigner par écrit tout ce qui était pensées et opinions de cet homme, mais que, d'autre part, en recueillant ces détails si insignifiants, on pouvait dire qu'il faisait

¹⁵ Billault 2000:85–92.

comme les chiens qui se nourrissent des miettes tombées d'un banquet, Damis lui répliqua : « s'il y a des banquets des dieux et si les dieux mangent, on peut dire qu'ils ont certainement aussi des serviteurs qui veillent à ce que même les miettes d'ambrosie tombées de la table ne soient pas perdues » (I 19).

Philostrate loue donc l'application et l'ambition de Damis dont la dévotion à l'égard d'Apollonios le poussait à ne rien laisser perdre de ce qui concernait le sage. Philostrate a-t-il la même ambition ? S'il l'approuve chez Damis, il ne la reprend pas à son compte. Tout en louant l'Assyrien, il se démarque de lui. Relatant le voyage d'Apollonios en Mésopotamie, il renonce à en rapporter tous les moments :

Pour être précis et pour ne rien laisser de côté de ce qu'a écrit Damis, j'aurais voulu raconter aussi leurs conversations tandis qu'ils traversaient le pays de ces barbares, mais le récit me pousse vers des sujets plus importants et plus admirables, mais pas au point, pourtant, de négliger ces deux éléments, le courage dont fit preuve Apollonios en traversant des nations barbares et qui pratiquent le brigandage alors qu'elles n'étaient pas encore soumises aux Romains, et la science qui lui permit d'arriver à comprendre le langage des animaux à la manière des Arabes (I 20).

Philostrate opère donc des choix dans la matière à sa disposition. Ces choix sont difficiles comme le montre la sinuosité de sa phrase. Il regrette d'avoir à les faire, y procède sous la contrainte qu'exerce sur lui son propre récit en le poussant vers des sujets importants au détriment des autres dont il parvient pourtant à sauver certains qui lui tiennent à coeur. A la fin, certains éléments accèdent au récit, tandis que d'autres en sont exclus et restent dans le silence. Mais la sélection pratiquée par Philostrate ne se réduit pas à cette alternative. Elle concerne aussi les épisodes qu'il relate sans les placer tous sur le même plan.

Philostrate les organise en séries rattachées à des périodes et à des lieux. Ainsi, au livre IV, il raconte le périple d'Apollonios en Asie Mineure et en Grèce après son voyage en Inde. Il fait une grande place aux séjours du sage à Ephèse, à Smyrne, à Athènes, à Olympie et à Sparte,¹⁶ mais passe plus vite sur son voyage en Thessalie et sur ses visites aux grands sanctuaires panhelléniques (IV 23–24). De même, au livre VII, il n'accorde pas la même importance à tous les épisodes qui se déroulent en prison, alors qu'Apollonios attend de comparaître devant Domitien. Il insiste sur

¹⁶ IV 2–4 et 10; 5–9; 17–22; 27–31; 32–33.

l'aide qu'Elie, le Préfet du Prétoire qui l'avait connu dans sa jeunesse, donne au sage et rapporte en détail son entretien avec lui. En revanche, il fait moins de place aux bravades d'un tribun à l'égard d'Apollonios (VII 16–20 et 21). Après un dialogue développé entre ce dernier et Damis (VII 22), commence une série de récits qui racontent comment certains compagnons de captivité des deux hommes se sont retrouvés en prison. Le premier récit, fort long, est fait par le prisonnier lui-même, le second consiste en un bref résumé, le troisième en un autre résumé plus développé (VII 23, 24 et 25). Comme d'autres prisonniers encore viennent parler à Apollonios, il leur adresse à tous un long discours (VII 26). A l'échec d'un provocateur introduit dans la prison pour pousser le sage à injurier l'empereur (VII 27) succède une autre série d'épisodes dont Philostrate précise qu'il les a sélectionnés pour leur importance parmi tous ceux que Damis, toujours soucieux de ne négliger aucun détail, avait mentionnés dans ses mémoires (VII 1). Apollonios dialogue avec un envoyé d'Elie puis, plus brièvement, avec un secrétaire impérial qui lui transmet une sommation à comparaître devant Domitien, puis, plus longuement, avec Damis (VII 28, 29 et 30). De retour en prison après sa première comparution devant le prince, il dialogue encore longuement avec un agent de ce dernier, puis plus brièvement avec Damis (VII 36–37). Philostrate agence donc les épisodes en séries asymétriques. Il insiste sur certains et passe plus vite sur d'autres en fonction de leur importance. Cette asymétrie est particulièrement frappante lorsqu'elle concerne les paroles d'Apollonios.

Si le sage, se conformant à la règle pythagoricienne de ἔχεμυθία, s'est astreint pour un temps au silence (I 14–15), il a beaucoup parlé avant et surtout après cette période. Philostrate réserve à cette masse de discours un traitement sélectif et diversifié. Il en cite certains, en résume d'autres, en mentionne d'autres encore sans préciser leur contenu. Ainsi, lorsqu'il relate le premier séjour du sage à Ephèse, il résume son premier discours et cite en partie l'un de ceux qui ont suivi sans rien dire des autres (IV 2–3). Il agence une séquence analogue pour le séjour d'Apollonios à Smyrne, résumant d'abord son discours sur la beauté de la ville et les vertus de ses habitants, puis citant celui où il traitait du bon gouvernement (IV 8–9). A Athènes, Apollonios a parlé si souvent que Damis lui-même n'a pas mentionné tous ses discours, mais seulement les plus importants. Parmi ces derniers, Philostrate procède à son tour à une sélection. Il choisit d'en résumer un portant sur la religion (IV 19), puis en cite un autre dénonçant la décadence des Dionysies (IV 21). Plus loin, il résume les conférences du sage à

Olympie (IV 21), mais cite sa harangue à ses disciples à Aricie (IV 38). En faisant alterner ainsi résumés et citations, il compose une anthologie des discours d'Apollonios. Ces discours sont parfois longs et même très longs, comme le plaidoyer que le sage avait préparé pour se défendre devant Domitien et que Philostrate rapporte *in extenso*, ce qui correspond à une trentaine de pages dans l'édition de C.P. Jones (VIII 7). Mais la longueur n'est pas le critère positif ou négatif qui détermine les choix de Philostrate. Ce dernier se décide d'après l'importance qu'il accorde aux discours :

Pour ne pas prolonger notre propos en exposant en détail ses leçons philosophiques dans chaque endroit et ne pas, d'un autre côté, avoir l'air d'être superficiel dans le récit auquel je travaille pour le transmettre à ceux qui ne connaissent pas cet homme, ma décision est de rapporter les plus importants d'entre eux et tous les faits qui méritent qu'on s'en souvienne plus que les autres. Considérons qu'ils sont équivalents aux séjours des fils d'Asclépios (VI 35).

Pendant leurs séjours dans les sanctuaires où ils étaient honorés, les fils d'Asclépios, Podalire et Machaon, passaient pour apparaître aux malades à qui ils prescrivaient des remèdes.¹⁷ Philostrate considère comme aussi salutaires les visites d'Apollonios dans les cités. Il en retient les discours et les événements qui lui semblent les plus importants et les agence dans son ouvrage.

A l'alternance entre citations, résumés et mentions de discours, il en ajoute une autre entre paroles et faits. S'il donne une grande place aux paroles d'Apollonios, qu'elles prennent la forme de discours, de dialogues ou de simples remarques, il les intègre dans l'économie générale du récit où elles alternent avec les relations d'événements et les descriptions de lieux. Ainsi, le premier discours d'Apollonios sur les sacrifices et les offrandes dans le sanctuaire d'Asclépios à Aigai se trouve-t-il encadré par deux séries d'épisodes (I 11, I 9–10 et 12). Pendant le séjour du sage à Athènes, c'est au contraire l'histoire du jeune homme possédé par un démon qui se trouve encadrée par deux plages de discours (IV 20, IV 19 et 21). En Ethiopie, les longues discussions entre Apollonios et le gymnosophe Thespésion et ses dialogues avec le jeune Nilos sont suivis par le récit de son voyage vers les Cataractes et par l'épisode où il rend un satyre inoffensif en l'enivrant (VI 10–22 et 23–27). De même, plus loin, une série d'épisodes situés dans divers

¹⁷ Jouanna 1992:22–24.

sanctuaires et cités fait-elle suite à deux leçons de sagesse d'Apollonios dont la première est plus longue que la seconde (VI 38–43 et 36–37). Et dans les épisodes qui précèdent son départ pour Rome où il va défier Domitien, le récit des événements est ponctué par ses paroles (VII 5–9). L'alternance entre faits et mots donne ainsi son rythme au récit. Elle y introduit une diversité encore accrue par les descriptions de lieux et de pays dont certaines prennent la forme de véritables monographies. C'est notamment le cas au début de certains livres : le livre II commence ainsi par un exposé sur la géographie du Caucase, le livre V par une présentation des Colonnes d'Hercule et de la région qui les environne et le livre VI par un tableau de l'Éthiopie (II 2–4, V 1–6, VI 1). Mais ces préambules géographiques peuvent aussi occuper une position centrale, comme ceux qui concernent la Mésopotamie et Babylone au livre I (I 20.2 et I 25) et l'Inde au livre II (II 17–19). Parfois, le récit fait place à des descriptions développées comme celle de la zone des cataractes du Nil (VI 23–26). Parfois aussi, la description constitue le point de départ d'un mouvement qui va de la géographie à l'histoire : ainsi, Philostrate laisse à peine entrevoir Taxila, mais décrit en détail un temple de cette ville indienne où des images d'Alexandre et de Porus le conduisent à évoquer les relations entre les deux rois (II 20–21). Ces tableaux géographiques, ces descriptions qui, à l'occasion, débouchent sur l'histoire ne sauraient passer pour des digressions ornementales. Ils dessinent le cadre réel de la vie d'Apollonios. Ils lui confèrent son véritable format. En effet, au-delà de la diversité introduite par l'alternance entre les faits et les paroles et par l'évocation des lieux, le récit possède une unité constante qui repose sur le personnage d'Apollonios.

Philostrate, nous l'avons vu, compare ses visites dans les cités et dans les sanctuaires à celles des fils d'Asclépios. Il souligne ainsi son aspect divin tel qu'il est perçu par ceux qui le rencontrent et tel qu'il entend le représenter et l'expliquer pour l'édification de ses lecteurs.

L'aspect divin d'Apollonios est inséparable du caractère humain de sa vie. Cette alliance l'apparente à un nouveau type de héros dont l'apparition dans la biographie grecque marque un tournant significatif d'un changement dans les mentalités. Après avoir raconté les vies des souverains, des grands capitaines, des poètes et des philosophes, les biographes se tournent maintenant vers les sages, les martyrs et les saints.¹⁸ Ces hommes constituent une élite spirituelle censée vivre en

¹⁸ Momigliano 1971:104.

communion avec la divinité.¹⁹ Cette communion constitue l'élément central de leurs biographies. Dans le cas d'Apollonios, Philostrate, comme nous l'avons vu (I 2-3), entend la traiter sur le même plan que ses paroles et ses actes. Il s'inscrit donc dans cette évolution du genre biographique. Il y participe à sa manière qui découle de la nature de son personnage.

Apollonios n'est, en effet, ni un saint, ni un martyr. C'est un philosophe qui passe pour un être divin. Cette condition détermine l'orientation du récit de Philostrate. Les vies des saints et des martyrs sont écrites pour exalter la gloire de Dieu qui s'est manifestée à travers elles. Elles proposent en modèle aux chrétiens des imitations remarquables de la vie du Christ et les invitent à les imiter à leur tour. Mais Philostrate n'écrit pas pour célébrer la grandeur et les pouvoirs d'un ou de plusieurs dieux païens, car Apollonios n'en a imité aucun en particulier. Si sa vie présente un intérêt, c'est parce qu'elle illustre la relation intime qu'il entretenait avec la divinité. De cette relation résultaient les pouvoirs et les connaissances surnaturels qu'il possédait et les merveilles qu'il a parfois accomplies. Mais ces traits prodigieux ne sont rapportés qu'à lui. Ils sont tout à sa gloire, celle d'un homme divin.

La notion d'homme divin doit l'essentiel de sa renommée au livre de L. Bieler, *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ*, mais elle correspond bien à une réalité dans la littérature et dans les croyances des premiers siècles de notre ère.²⁰ L. Bieler a défini l'homme divin par un certain nombre de traits qu'on retrouve dans le récit de Philostrate. La naissance d'Apollonios est, nous l'avons vu, précédée et entourée de signes divins (I 4-5). Dès son enfance, il montre une beauté et des qualités intellectuelles hors du commun ainsi que des dons de voyance et de prophétie dont il donnera, tout au long de sa vie, des preuves nombreuses.²¹ Il peut voyager à une vitesse prodigieuse en se retrouvant dans l'instant à l'endroit où il désire aller (IV 10). Il disparaît et apparaît à volonté,²² parle toutes les langues sans les avoir jamais apprises (I 19), dompte les monstres, exorcise les démons, endort les satyres et guérit les chiens enragés (IV 10, 20, 25; VI 27, 43). Il ramène même à la vie une jeune fille dont on célébrait les funérailles (IV 45). Sa propre mort est entourée de mystères, au point que Philostrate va jusqu'à émettre un doute sur sa réalité (εἴγε ἐτελεύτα,

¹⁹ Cox 1983:17-44.

²⁰ Pour une critique des conceptions de L. Bieler, voir dans ce volume l'étude de M. Van Uytenghe.

²¹ I 7-8, 10, 12, 22, 33; IV 4, 18, 24; V 12, 18; VII 41.

²² IV 10.1; VIII 5.4; VIII 10.

VIII 29) tout en rapportant les versions qu'on en donne et qui portent le sceau du merveilleux (VIII 30). Enfin, Apollonios fait des apparitions après sa mort (VIII 31). Sa vie présente donc des traits surnaturels où se reflètent les pouvoirs, la volonté et l'action de la divinité. Ces reflets sont inséparables de sa personne et du magistère spirituel qu'il exerce parmi les hommes.

La représentation de ce magistère constitue l'une des originalités de Philostrate par rapport aux autres biographes d'hommes divins à l'époque impériale. Il n'isole pas, en effet, l'enseignement donné par Apollonios du récit de sa vie. Il l'intègre, au contraire, à son cours dont il constitue à la fois le prolongement, le commentaire et l'éclairage philosophique. Comme Philostrate a choisi d'écrire un récit de grand format, il peut accorder une large place à ces leçons. Il rapporte ainsi certains longs discours où Apollonios instruit les hommes sur divers sujets et parle de sa vie. Au livre I, le sage disserte sur les offrandes et sur les sacrifices à faire aux dieux et sur le refus des dons par le philosophe (I 11, 35). Au livre II, il traite de la peinture, de l'ivresse et des rêves (II 22, 36–37). Au livre IV, il explique à ses compagnons le sens de sa visite à Rome où Néron fait régner la terreur (IV 38). Au livre V, il justifie devant ses disciples Dion et Euphratès l'action de Vespasien lancé à la conquête du pouvoir et lui donne des conseils (V 35–36). Au livre VI, il s'explique sur sa vie philosophique devant les gymnosophistes éthiopiens (VI 11 et 13). Au livre VII, il justifie sa décision d'aller à Rome affronter Domitien (VII 14). Enfin, le livre VIII contient le texte du plaidoyer qu'il avait préparé pour comparaître devant l'empereur et qu'il n'a pas prononcé, puisqu'il a soudain disparu du tribunal (VIII 7). C'est à la fois une apologie et une autobiographie philosophique. Ces longues conférences viennent donc ponctuer avec régularité ses décisions et ses actes. Elles en dégagent la signification et la portée. Elles sont l'exposé de connaissances et font partie à ce titre de cette sorte d'encyclopédie philosophique que forment, dans le récit, les paroles du sage. Elles constituent aussi, si on les considère dans leur ensemble, une défense et une illustration de la vie philosophique telle qu'il la conçoit. Elles composent une véritable apologie d'Apollonios.

Cette apologie met en perspective les pouvoirs surnaturels qu'il possède et les merveilles qu'il accomplit. Elle explique leur origine qui réside dans un mode de vie tout entier orienté vers la communication avec la divinité. Il implique un régime alimentaire et un emploi du temps rigoureux. Il requiert aussi une ascèse constante du corps et de l'âme

dont l'éther doit rester pur pour permettre le contact avec les dieux.²³ Philostrate offre bien à l'admiration de ses lecteurs les prodiges qui émaillent la vie de son personnage, mais il leur propose aussi d'imiter sa manière d'atteindre à la perfection spirituelle qui les rend possibles. Il ne choisit pas d'écrire seulement un récit à sensation, il veut aussi instruire et persuader. Son oeuvre relève à la fois de la littérature fantastique et de la littérature édifiante. Il est un biographe engagé aux côtés de son héros.

Cet engagement se traduit par les commentaires dont il accompagne son récit. Ils n'ont rien d'allusif ni de discret. Philostrate prend lui-même la parole pour les formuler. Il intervient d'abord pour réfuter des erreurs et des mensonges qu'on a proférés au sujet d'Apollonios. Il le défend à plusieurs reprises contre l'accusation de magie,²⁴ disqualifie pour ignorance Moeragénès qui a écrit un livre sur le sage (I 3), rejette les calomnies attribuant à ce dernier une aventure amoureuse qui l'aurait conduit à un exil temporaire en Scythie (I 13), attaque ceux qui jugent trop timorée son attitude à l'égard de Néron et leur répond en célébrant son courage face à Domitien et en niant qu'il ait imploré ce dernier dans une lettre (VII 1-4, 35). Il ne critique jamais Apollonios, ne formule jamais la moindre réserve sur ses paroles ou sur ses actes. Il se fait, au contraire, son apologiste constant et le maintient sans cesse au centre de son propos.

Il ne laisse pas le lecteur constater par lui-même cette persévérance, il la souligne à son intention. Il commence son ouvrage par des considérations sur Pythagore et ses disciples, puis les interrompt soudain en se rappelant lui-même à l'ordre :

On raconte encore beaucoup d'autres histoires sur ceux qui ont philosophé à la manière de Pythagore, mais il ne convient pas que je les aborde maintenant car je me hâte d'en venir au récit que je me suis proposé de mener à bien (I 1).

Cette mise au point n'est que la première d'une longue série où Philostrate commente sa manière de conduire son récit. Il justifie ainsi sa relation du séjour du sage dans le sanctuaire d'Aigai (I 9), la sélection qu'il opère parmi tous les entretiens consignés par Damis (I 20), le résumé qu'il fait de l'histoire d'Alexandre et de Porus (II 21), sa description de

²³ Voir en particulier I 8 et VIII 7.

²⁴ I 2; V 12; VII 39.

la chasse aux dragons en Inde (III 6), sa mention d'une conversation entre Apollonios et Iarchas sur les merveilles de ce pays (III 45) et son excursus sur la production d'un certain type de perle dans une île indienne (III 57). Il affirme que son anthologie des paroles d'Apollonios à Athènes est la plus sérieuse (IV 22), explique pourquoi il s'est attardé sur l'histoire du jeune homme amoureux d'une femme vampire (IV 25), mais refuse de s'appesantir sur la naissance d'une île qu'avait annoncée Apollonios (IV 34). Il précise qu'il ne va citer que les plus importantes parmi les lettres échangées par Apollonios et Musonius Rufus (IV 46), de même qu'il ne mentionnera, au sujet des Colonnes d'Hercule, que ce qui en vaut la peine (V 1). Il n'insistera pas sur les pensées admirables de Musonius Rufus pour ne pas gâter la simplicité que ce dernier y mettait (V 19). Il indique qu'il ne citera, parmi les nombreux discours d'Apollonios, que les plus significatifs pour n'être ni superficiel ni trop long (VI 35), considère comme intéressante l'histoire du jeune homme tombé amoureux d'une statue d'Aphrodite (VI 40) et remarque qu'il pourrait raconter bien d'autres histoires de philosophes qui ont résisté à des tyrans, mais que la conduite d'Apollonios face à Domitien n'en resterait pas moins incomparable (VII 2). Il ne veut pas mentionner certaines péripéties survenues pendant le séjour d'Apollonios en prison, car elles ne présentent guère d'intérêt (VII 28). Il ne veut pas non plus anticiper sur la comparution du sage devant Domitien (VII 35). Enfin, il se justifie de rapporter le plaidoyer qu'Apollonios avait préparé pour cette circonstance (VIII 6). Il intervient donc dix-neuf fois pendant son récit pour commenter ses choix de narrateur. Ceux-ci portent sur une vaste matière et Philostrate laisse entendre souvent qu'il pourrait en dire bien plus qu'on n'en lira dans son ouvrage. Il reprend ici un topique de la littérature hagiographique qui consiste à magnifier le sujet qu'on traite en soulignant qu'on ne peut, vu sa richesse, le traiter en entier.²⁵ En même temps, il se met en scène, dessinant un autoportrait du biographe au travail.²⁶

C'est l'autoportrait d'un artiste soucieux de maîtriser l'ensemble des données à sa disposition et de les utiliser au mieux pour composer son oeuvre. A observer ainsi Philostrate tel qu'il se donne à voir à la tâche, on remarque qu'il n'a aucun doute sur les décisions qu'il prend, qu'il tranche sans hésiter dans le sens qui lui semble le plus propice à

²⁵ Festugière 1972.

²⁶ Billault 1993a.

la défense et la glorification d'Apollonios. Son autoportrait pêche-t-il par complaisance ? On se tromperait à le considérer seulement comme un exercice narcissique.

En effet, Philostrate adresse ces explications et ces justifications à ses lecteurs. Il les prend à témoin de son travail. Il souligne ainsi que la biographie institue une relation particulière entre trois personnes : l'auteur, son personnage et le lecteur. Il n'est certes pas le premier à s'en aviser. D'autres biographes ont utilisé à leur manière cette relation en portant des jugements, élogieux ou critiques, sur ceux dont ils racontaient la vie. L'originalité de Philostrate réside dans la mise en relief du travail biographique expliqué au lecteur alors même que celui-ci en découvre le résultat. Cette exégèse consiste en fragments de poétique biographique dont l'ensemble constitue un véritable discours métanarratif qui se poursuit, par intermittences, d'un bout à l'autre de l'ouvrage, au lieu d'être isolé dans un commencement en forme de préface. Philostrate fait ainsi de la composition de son oeuvre le second sujet de son récit.

Qu'il s'agisse de l'éloge d'Apollonios de Tyane ou des formes et du travail de sa représentation, Philostrate opère donc un certain nombre de choix narratifs qui, sans l'isoler de la tradition biographique grecque, lui assurent en son sein une place particulière. Il la doit à la nature d'homme divin de son personnage, mais aussi à sa manière d'organiser autour de lui un récit encomiastique, chronologique et anthologique. En outre, il inclut dans ce récit un discours portant sur sa composition. Cette dimension métanarrative révèle un auteur conscient de son art et soucieux de montrer cette conscience au lecteur à qui il ouvre, comme à un partenaire, les portes de son oeuvre. Les choix narratifs de Philostrate façonnent donc la figure d'Apollonios de Tyane, mais ils laissent aussi entrevoir sa propre personnalité d'écrivain.

TOWARDS A NEW CRITICAL EDITION OF
PHILOSTRATUS' *LIFE OF APOLLONIUS*:
THE AFFILIATION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS*

GERARD BOTER

I. *Introduction*

The need of a new critical edition of the *Vita Apollonii Tyanei* (VA) by Philostratus has long been felt. Christopher Jones, in his recent Loeb edition of the work, complains (2005 vol. 1:23): “The neglect of the work as literature is reflected in the neglect of the text.” He goes on to state: “So far the nearest approach to a proper edition is that of C.L. Kayser in 1844.” Jones calls his own edition an “interim text” (2005 vol. 1:25), based principally on Kayser’s second edition of 1870.

The first requirement for a critical edition, a full study of all the extant manuscripts, has not yet been fulfilled. Kayser shows knowledge of all the extant MSS of VA. But although he makes some remarks about the stemmatical relationship of the MSS, his account cannot be regarded as conclusive, if only because in Kayser’s time the stemmatic method had not yet reached its full maturity. Moreover, he had only a very restricted knowledge of the majority of the MSS.

In this chapter I will first sketch the work on the text of VA done until now; then I will give a list of the MSS which contain the complete text or longer excerpts; subsequently I will discuss the affiliation of the MSS, presenting a *stemma codicum*.¹ Finally, I will open some perspectives on a new edition of the text.

II. *Critical work on the Vita Apollonii*

The Aldine edition of VA appeared in 1501–1502, in the house of the famous printer Aldus Manutius in Venice, accompanied by a

* I wish to thank Jaap-Jan Flinterman and Emilie van Opstall for commenting on an earlier draft of this chapter.

¹ The scope of this chapter prohibits a full presentation of all the relevant material, such as the codicological description of the MSS.

Latin translation by Alemano Rinuccino. The Greek text is based on Laurentianus 69,26.²

In 1608 an edition of the complete Philostratus was published by Fed. Morel in Paris. Morel took the Aldine edition as the basis for his text, making some use of Parisinus gr. 1801.³

In 1709 Gottfried Olearius produced another edition of the complete Philostratean corpus. Besides the two existing editions, he consulted four MSS preserved in the Vatican library plus a MS from the Bibliotheca Magdalenensis in Vratislava (modern Wrocław).⁴ Moreover, he used the notes made by Richard Bentley, who once envisaged the project of preparing a new edition himself, but abandoned the idea.⁵

In the eighteenth century two outstanding scholars worked on the text of VA, Johann Jacob Reiske and Ludovicus Caspar Valckenaer. Their notes on VA, however, were not published during their lifetimes, but appeared in print at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶

In the earlier decades of the nineteenth century much acumen was spent on VA by scholars such as Hamaker, Bekker and, most prominently, Jacobs.

In 1844, the *editio maior* of the complete Philostratean corpus by C.L. Kayser was published. In the preface to VA, Kayser enumerates the MSS known to him, adding a brief description of their mutual relationship. He further mentions the main representatives of the indirect tradition: Eusebius, Photius, Suda, Zonaras and Thomas Magister. I will return to Kayser's edition later on.

In the preface to his 1870 *editio minor*, Kayser discusses the work done after his edition, notably the Didot edition by Westermann (1849) and the *Mnemosyne* articles by Cobet (1859). Kayser admits a number of Cobet's and Westermann's conjectures, but goes to great lengths to refute many more solutions offered by Cobet. In addition, he prints many readings in his text which figured in the critical apparatus to the 1844 edition (usually preceded by "Fo<rtasse>") and conjectures made

² See Kayser 1844:XI.

³ Morel 1608: unnumbered page of the *praefatio*, after the passages from Photius and Suda.

⁴ Vaticani gr. 956 & 1016, Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 329, Vaticanus Urbinas gr. 110, Vratislaviensis, BU, Rehd. 39; see Olearius 1709:X. The Vratislaviensis has got lost in World War II (information supplied by Dr Anna Holyk of the Wrocław University Library, letter of August 11, 2004).

⁵ For information about Bentley's work on Philostratus see Hägg 1982.

⁶ See Schenkl 1892, 1893.

by himself after 1844 (marked with an asterisk in the *Adnotatio critica* [pp. XXVI–XXXIV]).

The Loeb edition by Conybeare was published in 1912, accompanied by the *Letters of Apollonius* and Eusebius' treatise *Against Hierocles*. Conybeare relies on Kayser for his information on the MSS; the only thing he says about the text is (1912, vol. 1:17): "The text followed by the translator is that of C.L. Kayser, issued by B.G. Teubner, at Leipzig in 1870." Nonetheless, Conybeare's Greek text differs from Kayser's in a number of places; this is not recorded by Conybeare, who does not add any critical notes to his text.⁷

Since Kayser's *editio minor* the text of VA has not received much attention. There are a few articles with critical notes on isolated passages.⁸ John Jackson wrote countless notes in his copy of Conybeare's edition; the most remarkable of these have been published in Jones' new Loeb edition (see below). Tomas Hägg considered and abandoned the project of preparing a critical edition.⁹

In 1982–1983 Dr Edoardo Crisci wrote his *tesi di laurea* at the Sapienza University of Rome, entitled *Ricerche sulla tradizione manoscritta della Vita di Apollonio di Tiana di Filostrato*, under the guidance of Prof. G. Cavallo.¹⁰

Conybeare's Loeb edition held sway for almost a full century, until it was succeeded by the new Loeb by Christopher Jones (2005). Jones too refrains from studying the MSS tradition, and starts from Kayser's 1870 edition. For the emendation of his text he uses conjectures proposed both before and after Kayser's and Conybeare's editions; further he adds a number of conjectures of his own.

III. *The manuscripts of the Vita Apollonii*

Apart from the MSS which contain only fragments of VA, the following MSS are known to be extant. The sigla, added between brackets, have been given by me.

⁷ See for instance II 6 (47.7), where Conybeare (1912, vol. 1:130) adds ἐς before τοὺς Ἰνδοὺς.—All references to the text of VA are to Kayser's 1870 edition.

⁸ See Radermacher 1895, Headlam 1895, Richards 1909, Platt 1911, Lucarini 2004.

⁹ See Hägg 1982.

¹⁰ I thank Dr Crisci for permitting me to consult a copy of his unpublished thesis, which proves to be very useful.

1. Berolinensis Phill. 1591 (gr. 315), s. xv (**B**) [books I–IV only]
2. Escorialensis gr. 227 (Φ.III.8), s. xii (**E**)
3. Florentinus Laurentianus CS 155, ca. 1400 (**S**) [breaking off after 332.16 κἀργόθεν]
4. Florentinus Laurentianus 69,26, s. xv (**G**)
5. Florentinus Laurentianus 69,27, s. xiv (**H**)
6. Florentinus Laurentianus 69,33, ca. 1000 (**F**)
7. Lugdunensis BPG 73D, s. xiv (**L**)
8. Parisinus gr. 1696, s. xiv (**P**)
9. Parisinus gr. 1801, s. xiv (**A**)
10. Vaticanus gr. 956, s. xiv (**T**) [book I, up to 26,1 μελετώη]
11. Vaticanus gr. 1016, s. xv (**R**)
12. Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 329, s. xiv (**Q**) [starting at 144,27 ἐξωγράφει]
13. Vaticanus Urbinas gr. 110, s. xv (**U**)
14. Venetus Marcianus gr. 391 (coll. 856), s. xv (**Y**)
15. Venetus Marcianus gr. 392 (coll. 837), s. xv (**Z**)
16. Venetus Marcianus gr. App. Cl. XI 29 (coll. 1376), s. xiv (**M**)
17. Vratislaviensis, BU, Rehd. 39, s. xv (**V**) [lost in World War II]

Kayser 1844 mentions all these MSS in his preface;¹¹ however, this does not imply that he made full use of them for his edition. There are only six MSS for which he had full collations at his disposal:¹² the two Paris MSS, the Laurentianus 69,33, the Vratislaviensis [now lost], the Schellershemiensis [that is, Laur. CS 155] and the Leiden MS. Of these MSS Kayser gives a full report in his apparatus. For the remaining MSS he reports the readings for book VI, ch. 11 only, just to give an impression of these MSS.

The stemmatic relationship of the manuscripts

Kayser describes the MSS and their mutual relationship in the preface to his 1844 edition (pp. IX–XIV). When he published his 1844 edition, the stemmatic method was still in its infancy; therefore we should not blame Kayser for not constructing a full-scale stemma.

¹¹ The Berlin MS, however, is not recorded there. Kayser briefly mentions it in the *Appendix*, p. XXIV, designating it as “Middlehillianus 315”: this name derives from the former owner of the collection of MSS to which our MS belongs, Sir Phillips of Middlehill.

¹² See Kayser 1870:XXVn18: “Notavi libros, quibus totis usus sum, diductis literis.”

Kayser classifies the MSS in two families, which is correct, on the understanding that I do not share his opinion on the position of **A**, as I will illustrate. His first family consists of **EMPTU**, the second of **FGHLQRSVYZ**; in the appendix (p. XXIV) Kayser states that **B** (which he does not mention in the preface) is related to **M**. In accordance with nineteenth century habits, Kayser characterizes these families as *melior* and *deterior*: good and bad.¹³

After discussing these two families, however, Kayser states that the constitution of the text would be very difficult indeed, if salvation were not brought by Parisinus gr. 1801 (siglum **A**), which he designates hyperbolically as *unus genuinae scripturae testis*, “the only witness of the genuine text”.¹⁴ In this way, he sets **A** apart against all the other MSS. Therefore it is all the more remarkable that Kayser classifies **A** *within* his first family.¹⁵ Obviously, he does not realize that he holds two conflicting views: in his representation, **A** takes up an independent position against the two families taken together; but at the same time Kayser makes **A** belong to one of these two families. A possible explanation for this curious fact may lie in the deeply rooted conviction, already noted above, that traditions are basically bipartite, consisting of a good and a bad branch. And because Kayser attaches so much value to **A**, the only choice for him was to make **A** a member of the good family.

Crisci has collated all extant MSS for books I, II, V and VII, and constructed a full *stemma codicum* on the basis of his collations. Further, he has studied the excerpts in Photius, and compared these with the MSS.

I have collated the first half of book II (pp. 43.5–59.16), the first half of book IV (pp. 125.1–142.10), the first half of book VI (pp. 204.1–224.3) and the first half of book VIII (pp. 296.1–318.19). My conclusions usually coincide with Crisci’s; serious differences are restricted to the second family (**γ**). Whenever my findings conflict with Crisci’s conclusions,

¹³ The very concept of good and bad families (or, for that matter, good and bad MSS) is fundamentally mistaken: *readings* can be good or bad, but *MSS* usually contain both good and bad readings. See Maas 1957³: *passim*; Pasquali 1952²: 41–108. For a very humorous and eloquent protest against the concept of the *codex optimus*, see Housman 1905: xi–xvi.

¹⁴ Kayser (1870: XXVn18) attached so much value to the MS that he characterized it, in Horace’s words (C. I 12.47–48), as *velut inter ignes luna minores*, “like the moon, shining amidst the smaller heavenly bodies”.

¹⁵ See Kayser (1844), Appendix p. XXIV: “Ordo autem primae familiae sic constituendus fuit: π. Paris. 1801. e. Escorialensis. μ. Marcianus Cl. XI, 29, olim monast. St. Michaelis. p. Paris. 1696. u. Urbinas 110. ρ. Vaticanus 953.” Cf. Kayser 1870: XXV.

I have checked the material adduced by him in the MSS; in some places Crisci's report proved to be wrong or incomplete.¹⁶ The report I will give presently is based both on Crisci's studies and on my own observations.

The archetype

In the last resort, all MSS are derived from a lost common ancestor, which is not identical with Philostratus' own copy. This is proved by the numerous places where all the MSS exhibit a wrong text, which is either to be restored from the indirect tradition or by conjectural emendation. Here are some instances of wrong readings occurring in all the MSS:

- 4.6 Νινίῳ Bentley: νίνῳ codd.
- 6.25 σοφίᾳ Eusebius: φιλοσοφίᾳ codd.
- 13.1 μήλοις M. Casaubon: καμήλοις codd.
- 28.8 χάλिका Jackson: χαλκὸν codd.
- 62.21 ἔμπνουν Jacobs: εὐπνουν codd.
- 79.22 λογίων Bentley: λόγων codd.
- 130.18 πλείστους Kayser: πλείους codd.
- 137.27 ἡσκοῦντο Kayser: ἥσκηντο codd.
- 141.11 θήσεσθαι Hamaker: στήσεσθαι codd.
- 178.30 φάναι Kayser: ᾶν codd.
- 207.25 φυλάζοιτο Suda: φυλάζαιτο codd.
- 208.22 φθεγξομένου Kayser: φθεγξαμένου codd.
- 261.2 αὔρας Valckenaer: ὥρας codd.
- 288.25 εἰ-φήσεις Eusebius: om. codd.

The archetype must have contained variant readings. This appears from cases as 46.20: here **F** (which is the only primary MS deriving from **γ** here) has οὐ for σὺ; **A** and **E** have οὐ in the text, with σὺ added above the line; **BMPU** have σὺ in the text. For another instance see 126.30 **ξυγκλείσαντας** **Aγ**: **ξυγκλείσαντες** **A^sβ**. Crisci (pp. 150–154) notes three places where double readings in **A** correspond to the readings of the two families: 22.8 ἤρετο **A^sβ**, ἔροιτο **Aγ**; 65.1 φέρεσθαι **A^sβ**, φαίνεσθαι **Aγ**; 284.4 ἐπὶ **A^sγ**, ἀπὸ **Aβ**.

¹⁶ This is not intended as criticism: everyone collating a long text overlooks some variants, especially later additions written in small script (as is often the case in **F**).

The stemma of the MSS of the VA is bipartite. **A** (Parisinus 1801) stands apart against all the other MSS, which derive from a lost common ancestor (**α**), which is a gemellus of **A**; **A** has no extant progeny. First, I will deal with the relationship of **A** and **α**. Next, I will show that **α** has given birth to two families, the first one (**β**) consisting of **BEMPTU**, the other one (**γ**) of **FGHLQRSVYZ**.

The relationship of Parisinus gr. 1801 to α, the source of all the other MSS

It has already been noted that Kayser's view about the unique value of **A** conflicts with his ranking **A** within his first family (Kayser's *melior familia*). Crisci has rightly recognized that **A** constitutes a branch in its own right, separate from the two families taken together. In the first place, **α** has a number of separative errors against **A**. Some instances:

- | | |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| 3.5 | καίτοι] καὶ |
| 3.22–23 | τὰ δὲ ἐκ τῶν ἐκείνου ἐπιστολῶν om. |
| 11.19 | ἐλίττων] ἐλάττων |
| 40.1 | θηρίων] χωρίων |
| 44.9 | Διονύσῳ] διονυσίῳ |
| 125.26 | προσέχειν om. |
| 127.1 | οὕπῳ] οὕτως |
| 128.1 | ἀπάντων] καὶ πάντων |
| 131.3 | ἔδος] εἶδος |
| 132.31 | ξυμβαίνειν] ξυμβαίνειν |
| 169.6 | ἀνοητότερα] ἀνώτερα |
| 198.7 | μεταδιδάσκων] μετὰ διδασκάλων |
| 204.15 | ἐπιρραίνουσί] περαίνουσί |
| 210.4 | φόνου om. |
| 213.15 | κοσμίῳ] κόσμῳ |
| 221.18 | ῥα om. |
| 260.16 | θαρσαλεώτατος] θαρσαλεώτερος |
| 299.5 | ἀπάξει] ἀπάξει |
| 300.9 | εἰ δὲ τοῦτο om. |
| 304.32 | ἀρχήν] ἀρετήν |
| 311.16 | οἷς] καὶ οἷς |

On the other hand, there are a number of places where **A** is wrong against the others. Here are some instances:

46.19	εἰκότως] εἰκότος
55.10–12	τὸ-ἔστηκε om.
57.19	τοῦ om.
129.11	ἔξεπονοῦντο] ἔξεπονεῖτο
133.23	ἦν-ἐμήνισας om.
137.14	ἀνάλαβε] ἀνέλαβε
206.23	λύσις] λύσιν
208.27	ἐλθούσης] ἐλθούση
222.30	τὰ] τὸν
300.14	παθὼν τι] παθόντι
302.17	σῆς om.
304.3	γῆν om.
307.8	ἐπανούργουν] ἐμηχανώμην
308.2	φοροῦσιν] φρονοῦσιν
311.17	χρώματα] χρήματα

Further, **A** has a long omission in book IV, covering more than three pages of Kayser's text (130.14–133.21 τέχνη-γὰρ);¹⁷ the end of the work, amounting to five pages, is missing as well (breaking off after 339.11 ἐν τοῖς βα[.]¹⁸ And the fact that **A** belongs to the fourteenth century in itself is enough to show that it cannot be the source of the two major representatives of the two families, **E** (twelfth century) and **F** (ca. 1000 AD).

These data seem to point to a clear-cut bipartite stemma, but there are some complicating factors. In the first place, there are quite a few places where **A** has double readings, added by the first hand. Some of these are obvious glosses.¹⁹ See for instance:

44.14	ἀνοίστρησεν: ἐξέμηνεν in margine
143.11	πρόρρησιν: προαγόρευσιν, προλογία in margine

¹⁷ The omission may well be due to the loss of one or more leaves in **A**'s exemplar.

¹⁸ The text breaks off half-way the third line of f. 204v; the loss of the final part of the text may therefore be due once more to physical damage of **A**'s exemplar.

¹⁹ Occasionally, an original gloss seems to have replaced the authentic reading: see for instance 307.8 ἐπανούργουν] ἐμηχανώμην.

In other cases, however, we are dealing with variants. Some instances:

- 54.14 μέγαν] μέγα, αν s.l.
 126.30 ξυγκλείσαντας habet, ε s.l. (= ξυγκλείσαντες)
 142.16 περιέβαλεν habet, λ et β s.l. (= περιέλαβεν)

In all probability, many of such readings come from A's exemplar, which has undergone contamination (see above).

More important, from a stemmatic point of view, is the fact that there are some places where **A** agrees in error with the first family (**β**). Crisci lists eight places where **A** and the first family agree in error:

- 32.5 τὸν] τῶν
 36.7 ἐστὶν] εἰσὶν
 56.20 τοῦτο] τουτὶ
 59.17 Ἀκεσίνου] Ἀρκεσίμου
 71.23 παρὰ] περὶ
 79.6 ὑποκρίνοιντο] ὑποκρίνονται
 202.8 ἦττεν] ἦγεν
 268.16 τοιοῦτό] τοιοῦτόν

Further, Crisci mentions twelve places where they share the omission of a small word (article, particle etc.).

- 38.26 τε om.
 39.29 τοῦ om.
 51.10 οἱ om.
 57.20 μὲν om.
 64.16 καὶ om.
 70.12 ὁ om.
 81.11 τε om.
 180.3 καὶ alterum om.
 197.10 που om.
 202.12 αὐτοῦ om.
 281.27 τῶν om.
 291.20 μὲν om.

On the other hand, Crisci lists a few places where **A** agrees in error or omission with the second family:

- 10.16 ὄν om.
 77.6 μειονεκτήσῃ ἐν τῷ] μειονεκτήσῃ τῷ
 84.12 ἡγούμεθα] ἡγούμεθα
 276.22 καὶ alterum om.
 281.31 τῷ om.

In the passages studied by me there are similar cases of agreement between **A** and the first or second family. There are several possible explanations for this phenomenon:

- Some common errors may have arisen independently. This goes especially for trivial errors as 32.5 τὸν] τῶν (immediately followed by Αἰολέων) and 268.16 τοιοῦτό] τοιοῦτόν **Aβ**. But the same may have happened in passages as 45.1–3. Here, Philostratus tells about the people living near the Caucasus, who regard the eagle as their enemy and καλιάς γε (...) καταπιμπρᾶσιν ἰέντες βέλη πυρφόρα, “they set fire to their nests, by shooting fire-bearing missiles”. Here **A** and **β** have πυροφόρα instead of πυρφόρα (the reading of **γ**), which is obviously wrong: it would be rather pointless to feed the young eagles by shooting missiles containing πυρός, “wheat”, instead of πῦρ, “fire”. But the corruption of πυρφόρα into πυροφόρα is easily made and may well have occurred in **A** and **β** independently.
- In other cases the deviation from Kayser's text may be correct. This appears to be the case at 126.26–28, where Philostratus speaks about the altruistic behaviour of birds; he continues: ἀλλὰ κἄν κοινωνοῦντα ἑτέροις ἴδωμεν, ἐκεῖνο μὲν ἀσωτίαν καὶ τρυφήν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἡγούμεθα (...), “And when we see someone sharing his food with others, we regard this as wastefulness, luxury and so on”. Here ἐκεῖνο, read in **A** and **β**, is obviously correct against ἐκεῖνον, which is found in **γ** and in the editions. The same explanation might be valid for some of the more trivial variant readings noted by Crisci. At 302.25 the editions offer ὅ σε καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην ἀφαιρήσεται; καὶ is only found in **γ**, and it is absent from **A** and **β**; it might very well be an interpolation, introduced as a result of misunderstanding the double accusative σε and τὴν ἀρχὴν dependent on ἀφαιρήσεται. Agreement of **A** with either of the two families can be regarded as decisive in matters of word order. For instance, at 315.12 φάσμα κάκει, the reading of the editions, is found in **γ**; **A** and **β** have κάκει φάσμα; moreover, φάσμα κάκει is *lectio facilior*, because τι precedes immediately.

- In the third place, common errors may be due to double readings in the archetype.
- Finally, the family containing a good reading against **A** and the other family may have received this good reading through contamination or conjectural emendation.

All in all, I think we can safely conclude that the stemma is bipartite, as also postulated by Crisci: on the one hand **A**, on the other the two families **β** and **γ**, comprising all the other MSS.

α, the source of all the MSS except A

The fact that all the other MSS derive from **α** is proved by the observation that they all share the errors which separate **α** from **A**; a number of these readings has already been quoted above. The derivatives of **α** are grouped in two families, **β** and **γ**.

The following MSS derive from **β**: Berolinensis Phill. 1591 (gr. 315) (**B**), which contains books I–IV only; Escorialensis gr. 227 (Φ.III.8) (**E**); Parisinus gr. 1696 (**P**); Vaticanus gr. 956 (**T**), which contains only book I, up to 26.1 μελετῶν; Vaticanus Urbinas gr. 110 (**U**); Venetus Marcianus gr. App. Cl. XI 29 (coll. 1376) (**M**).

Here are the descendants of **γ**: Florentinus Laurentianus 69,26 (**G**); Florentinus Laurentianus 69,27 (**H**); Florentinus Laurentianus 69,33 (**F**); Lugdunensis BPG 73D (**L**); Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 329 (**Q**), which starts at 144.27 ἐξωγράφει; Vaticanus gr. 1016 (**R**); Florentinus Laurentianus CS 155 (**S**); Vratislaviensis, BU, Rehd. 39 (**V**) [lost in World War II]; Venetus Marcianus gr. 391 (coll. 856) (**Y**); Venetus Marcianus gr. 392 (coll. 837) (**Z**).

The existence of these two hyparchetypes appears from the fact that each of the two has separative errors against the other one (and, of course, against **A**).

First, I will list some errors common to the descendants of **β**:

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|
| 8.27 | ἔφη om. |
| 16.22 | ταῦτα] τὰ τοιαῦτα |
| 23.10 | φοίνικος] φοίνικας |
| 44.6 | Ἀρμενίοις] ἄρμενίων |
| 48.7–8 | πάντα ὠνεῖσθαι] ὠνεῖσθαι πάντα |
| 55.26 | ἐκ om. |

60.23	τῷ Νείλῳ om.
69.7	ἐμέ σοι] ἐμοί σε
82.25	οὐκ ἂν ὧ βασιλεῦ] ὧ βασιλεῦ οὐκ ἂν
130.32	μέγεθος] μέγιστος
131.23	μάλα] μᾶλλον
136.25	ἐν τῷ] ἐντὸς
142.3	αἶμα ὑμῶν] ὑμῶν αἶμα
186.11	Σόλυμα] ἱεροσόλυμα
204.28	βούλονται] βουλεύονται
207.7	Τιμασίων] τίμων
212.6	φιλοσοφία] σοφία
223.11	βακχεύωσιν] βακχεύσωσιν
254.28	Ῥηγίου ἐκπεσὼν] ἐκ ῤηγίου πεσὼν
296.26	ἄκροασόμενοι] ἄκροασάμενοι
298.16–17	οὐκοῦν-πέπεικα om.
306.6	τῇ om.
308.4	ἐπλέξατο] ἐπελέξατο
312.23	μὲν om.
315.6	τίνας] τίνος
318.13	προσέστηκεν] προέστηκεν

Here are some characteristic readings of the derivatives of γ:

1.9–10	τὰ τοιαῦτα οἱ θεοὶ μᾶλλον] οἱ θεοὶ μᾶλλον τὰ τοιαῦτα
6.11	οὐδαμοῦ om.
41.6	διὰ τοῦ] δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ
46.16–17	προσέπεσε περὶ αὐτοῦ] περὶ αὐτοῦ προσέπεσε
49.4	ἐμαυτοῦ] ἐμοῦ
53.6	μονονοῦ] μονονουχὶ
75.14	μεταχειρίζεσθαι] μεταχειρίσασθαι
83.24	διελθόντες] προελθόντες
125.20–21	ὁ-ἀλλήλων om.
130.27	χώσασθαι] χώσαντες
139.15	μὴ] μὴ δὲ
169.23	ἀγείρειν] φιλοσοφεῖν
183.31	οὖν om.
186.20	εἶπεν] ἔφη
195.7	καὶ om.

201.6	τούτου] τούτων
212.24–29	ὡς-Ἀπολλώνιον] μὲν
254.9	ἔδοξεν] πρὸς αὐτάς ἔδοξεν
297.3	σίτου] σίτου χθῆς
299.23	νοσήσειν] νοσεῖν
301.30	ἀκροασομένοις] ἀκροασαμένοις
304.26	ἀνάγκασον] ἀναγκάσαι
314.32	γὰρ om.

The first family (β): BEMPTU

Within the first family the Escorialensis (**E**) stands apart against all the others (**B** has books I–IV only; **T** only has the beginning of book I). This appears from the fact that **E** has separative errors against the others and *vice versa*. Here are some readings peculiar to **E**:

6.24	δέ γε] δ' ἄγε
16.23	δ' om.
32.30	ἵππον] ἵππων
44.23	βούλονται] βούλοντο
46.13	περί] ὁ περί (sic)
68.24	διελέχθησαν] διελεχθῶς
127.27	μηδὲν] μηδὲ
128.24	ξυγκειμένους] ξυγκειμένου
142.8	σύ] σέ
168.15	καὶ om.
193.6	ἔλης] ἔλ'
204.7	Καταδούπων] κατωδούπων
211.16	κάκείνῳ] κάκείνο
221.19	αὐτῶν] αὐτὴν
268.15	εἰ Δημήτριε] εἶδη δημήτριε
297.16	λόγος] ἀδικοῦντα
299.27	καθαροὺς] καθαρμοὺς
309.1	χρυσοῦ] χρυσοὺς
309.7	τοὺς om.
314.13	αἰθρίᾳ] αἰτίαι (αἰτία MP)

Remarkably enough, **E** often has ση (the abbreviation of σημείωσαι) in the text; some instances: 274.4 αἱ μὲν ιδέα] ση αἱ μὲν ιδέα; 307.22 ἐπαινῶ ἀνθρώποις] ἐπαινῶ ση ἀνθρώποις.

On the other hand, **BMPTU** share many errors which have separative value against **E**; see for instance:

2.11	πέμμα om.
17.8–9	περὶ τῶν θεῶν] πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν
21.14	ὥς] ἐς
47.30	οὐ καὶ] οὐδὲ
55.32	αὐλὸν] ἄγρον
71.11	τρυφῶσιν] τραφῶσιν
78.32	ἐξισταμένη] ἐξανισταμένη
130.9	Θουρίοις] θηρίοις
138.18	τελετῆς] τελεύτης
140.11	πάντων] καὶ πάντων
173.14	γὰρ om.
179.1	ἔπαθες] ἔπαθον
186.26	εἶπε] μὲν εἶπε
205.11	Αἰγυπτίαν ἴσου] αἰγυπτίων ἀνίσου
214.28	αὐτῷ om.
222.26	προσγράφεις] προσγράφειν
256.15	μὲν om.
257.10	βασιλέα] βασιλέως
297.15–6	καὶ-λόγος om.
297.32	ἀνόνητόν] ἀνίκητόν
298.14	ταῦτα] πάντα
305.8	γράφων] γράφειν
312.23	φόνων] φόνου
314.11	ἡδίω] ἡδία

I will leave aside for the moment Vaticanus gr. 956 (**T**), which only has the beginning of book I. Of the other MSS, Parisinus gr. 1696 (**P**) [with its derivative Urbinas gr. 110 (**U**)] is a gemellus of Marcianus App. Cl. XI 29 (**M**) [with its derivative Berolinensis Phill. 1591 (**B**)]; both MSS have separative errors of their own. First, I will list some errors of **P**:

2.6	καὶ alterum om.
4.17	φιλομαθεστέροις] φιλομαθέσιν
20.2	γοῦν] οὔν
44.28	ῥαδία] ῥάδιον
48.22	εὐ οἶδα] οἶδα εὐ (corr. altera manus)
72.20	ἔχοντος] ἐχούσης

135.20	προσειπῶν] ποσειδῶν
139.17	καὶ alterum om.
140.13	ἐπανῆλθεν] ἐπῆλθεν
170.1	πράγματα om.
178.4	Εὐσεβῶν] ἄσεβῶν
196.2	παρανοῶν] παρανομῶν
206.23	λύσις παρ' ἐμοῦ] παρ' ἐμοῦ λύσις
208.23	φαίνεσθαι] φαίνεται
219.24	μὲν om.
265.29	φύσις καὶ νόμος om.
286.11	θανατῶντες] θανατοῦντες
293.31	ξυμβουλευσάντος] συμβουλευόντος
300.21	βούλοιο] βούλει
301.20	ἀπέλθοι] ἐπέλθοι
312.7	σοφίας] τῆς σοφίας
314.9	καὶ om.
318.12	καὶ] καὶ τὰ

Here are some errors of **M** against **P**:

7.7	τοὺς γονέας] τοῖς γονέοις
12.24	εὐαγῶγους] εὐάγους
25.3	πλασάμενος] πλασσάμενος
43.20	ἀνεστᾶσιν] ἐνεστᾶσιν
52.3	καὶ] καὶ τὸ
57.13	ἀπολαβοῦσαν] ἀπολαβούσης (αν s.l.)
128.13	περ] περὶ
129.24	ἐρετικοὶ] αἰρετικοὶ (a remarkable error, due to inner dictation, ostensibly made by an orthodox scribe)
131.9	ὑποθέμενος] ἀποθέμενος
204.7	ἐπικλύζει] ἐπιβλύζει
208.5	παῖδα γενέσθαι] γενέσθαι παῖδα
214.13	καθαρῶ] καθαρῶς
302.16	προκαταγινώσκειν] προγινώσκειν
310.25–27	ἐπιστάται-βοῦς om.
317.14	ἀνεβαλόμην] ἀνελαβόμην

The dependence of **U** on **P** can be regarded as certain, because **U** follows **P** everywhere, and adds a large number of errors of its own. Some instances:

- 45.17 τὰ εἶδωλα] τὸ εἶδωλον
 48.32 νύκτωρ om.
 54.24 ἐτῶν] ἐαυτῶν
 134.15 ἀποστρέφη] διαστρέφη
 139.12 ῥσμα] αἶμα (sic)
 141.13 μὲν] μὲν οὖν
 206.3 ὦνπερ] ὥσπερ
 210.31 Δάμις om.
 214.21 οὐδὲν om.
 218.2 δὲ om.
 298.32 ἀνθρώπων om.
 301.29 μαλακῶς] μάλα
 313.6 νόσον] νόσους
 318.3 τὰς] τοὺς

U also follows P in the numerous places where P has been corrected by a later hand. Some instances:

- 126.24 βοῶντές τε] βοῶν τε β: βοῶντες P^{2pc}U
 130.17 τὸν habent P^{2pc}U: τοῖς EBMP^{ac}
 138.23 μυοῦ habent P^{2pc}U: μυῆς BMP^{ac}
 141.13 κόρυν habent P^{2pc}U: κόρω BMP^{ac}
 142.6 Διόνυσε habent P^{2pc}U: δεύνυσε BMP^{ac}
 216.5 κολακεύσεις habent P^{2pc}U: κολακεύεις MP^{ac}
 297.23 ἀπαιτεῖ habent P^{2pc}U: ἀπαιτεῖν EMP^{ac}
 306.29 προσῆειν habent P^{2pc}U: προῆειν MP^{ac}

It is certain that at least for some of these corrections the corrector of P had recourse to another MS; this is proved by those places where a longer omission is suppleted, for instance 138.28–30 μὲν-ἀλλὰ om. BMP^{ac}: habent P^{2mg}U.

But in other places the reading of P² is not found elsewhere, which suggests that the corrector introduced them *suo Marte*. Crisci illustrates that the corrector of P was a gifted scholar, able to introduce conjectures in places where he judged the text unsatisfactory, and where he could not find a better reading in other MSS. Thus, at 11.19 the authentic reading ἐλίττων is found in A, while α has ἐλάττων; the corrector of P realized that this reading is nonsensical in this place, and replaced ἐλάττων by λέγων. I have found many similar cases. For instance, at

137.2, the corrector of **P** deleted δ', which may well be correct (Jones accepts **P**'s reading here); at 139.1 the corrector of **P** deleted ἐς τὸ; at 297.17 he added λόγος after ἔφη.

The number of errors of **M** against **B** is very low indeed: in the passages from books II and IV there is only one: 128.13 ἐπελθεῖν] ἀπελθεῖν. In books I and II, Crisci has found only five errors of **M** against **B**: 8.16 προσελθὼν] προσελθόν; 16.14 ἀμήχανα] ἀμήχθENA (but what looks like θε may be an attempt to correct a writing error into an α); 27.2 ἐγκεχαραγμένας] ἐγκεχαρμένας; 41.20 ἄν οὖν] οὖν ἄν; 42.7 ἀνεβάλλετο] ἀνεβάλλετο. He concludes that in these places the scribe of **B** (Demetrios Sgouropoulos) has corrected the errors of **M** by conjecture, and that **B** is a derivative of **M**. I share his conclusions. **B**, on the other hand, has many errors of its own, some of which are listed here:

1.16–17	ὤς-Ἀθηνᾶν om.
18.20	λογισμὸν] λογισμῶ
33.23	λέγονται] λέγεται
47.31	ἐπεδείξω] ἐπιδείξω
51.1	ἐκεῖνοι] ἐκείνης
57.21	φιλοτεκνοῦσι] φιλοτεκοῦσι
78.28–39	ἀνακουφιζόμενοι-κακοπραγίας om.
128.12	τοσαύτην] τοιαύτην
138.17	ἐγὼ om.
142.5	καταθύσειν] καταθήσειν

T only contains the first part of book I; although the material for comparison is not very rich, Crisci proves that it is to be regarded as a gemellus of **M**.²⁰ In the first place, **M** and **T** share the following conjunctive errors, which prove that they are gemelli:

6.27	ἐνεργῶ] ἐν ἔργῳ
16.16	ἀφθόνους] ἀφθόρους
19.27	συνῆν] συνών
25.3	πονηροῖς] πονηροῦ

²⁰ The readings of **T** are all taken from Crisci's study.

The separative errors of **M** against **T** prove that **M** cannot be the source of **T**; some instances:

7.7	τοὺς γονέας] τοῖς γονέοις
12.24	εὐαγώγους] εὐάγους
17.26	ἔδωκεν] ἔδυσκεν
21.22	ὀπόσα] ὀπόσαι

Because **T** contains only the beginning of book I, it cannot be the source of **M**, which contains the complete text; nevertheless, here are some separative errors of **T**:

3.22	εἶπον] εἶπεν
11.14	προτέρω] προτέρου
18.1	ὑπεραττικίζουσιν] ἄττικίζουσιν
24.8	ἄπελθεῖν] ἐπελθεῖν

Thus the affiliation of the first family is clear: **E** forms one branch, **P** and **M** (accompanied by **T** in the beginning of book I) the second.

The second family (γ): FGHLQRSVYZ

γ is the source of two extant MSS, Vaticanus Palatinus gr. 329 (**Q**), which starts at the end of book IV (144,27 ἐξωγράφει), and Laurentianus 69.33 (**F**). Each of the two MSS has separative errors against the other, which shows that they derive from **γ** independently. First, I will list some separative errors of **F** against **Q**:

170.11	ὥς om.
177.8	ὑμᾶς] ἡμᾶς
202.29	τῶν om.
209.10	γὰρ om.
213.17	ἐς] ὥς
215.5	μὴ om.
223.7	δὲ μὴ] μὴ δὲ
260.3	αὐτοῦ om.
263.16	δὲ om.
275.22	τῶν om.
291.8	ἔφη om.
293.27	τοῦ Ἀπολλωνίου] τῷ ἀπολλωνίῳ

- 302.14 ἀποδρᾶναι] ἀποδρᾶν
 308.15 ἐκλελῆσθαι] λελῆσθαι
 315.2 λοιμοῦ] τοῦ λοιμοῦ

Some errors of **Q**:²¹

- 207.10 ἐθαυμάσαμεν] ἐθαύμασεν
 209.11 τινὰ om.
 211.11 μετατάττειν] μετατάττει
 217.14 δώσουσιν] δίδωσιν
 222.28 ἀνημμέναι] ἀνειμέναι
 223.20 θαύματα] θαῦμα
 301.11 ἐπαινοῦντες] ἐπαινοῦντος
 310.32 σπὶ] σπὶ τὸ
 313.28 ἀληθείας] ἀδείας
 315.6 θαυμαστάς] θαῦμα
 317.12 με] μετὰ

F, the oldest extant MS of *VA* (ca. 1000 AD), is the ultimate source of all the other members of this family. In many places, **F** has undergone correction; these corrections usually return in its derivatives. A case in point is found at 127.5, where ἐνταῦθα is deleted in **F** by means of a thin horizontal stroke through the word; all the derivatives of **F** omit the word.²²

²¹ Because **Q** (14th century) is much younger than **F** (ca. 1000 AD), Crisci abstains from quoting separative errors of **Q**.

²² Crisci, as has already been stated above, assigns **F** a much lower position in the stemma than I do. According to him **GLS** stand apart against **FHRYZ**; within the last group **R** stands apart against the others, and **F** is a gemellus of the common ancestor of **HYZ**. I have checked the relevant MSS for all the readings adduced by Crisci (pp. 101–106); in some cases, his report is wrong. This goes especially for those places where **F** has been corrected by a later hand, who uses very light ink, and writes in very tiny script. Some instances: 167.2 ἵδρυνται habent **F**^{pc} **cett.**: ἵδρυνται **F**^{ac}; 178.17 νεὼς habent **F**^{pc} **cett.**: νεὼς **F**^{ac}. Elsewhere an error found in **F** is also found in other MSS, contrary to what Crisci states; some instances: 179.7 οὐδὲ habet **S**^{pc}: οὐ **F** et revera **S**^{ac} **L**; 295.6 οὕτω habent **F** et revera **L**: οὕπω **S**, sed hac in parte operis textus a manu posteriore exaratus est.

Here follows a full discussion of Crisci's treatment of the relationship of **R** and **F** (pp. 103–104). Crisci tries to show that **R** is independent from **F**, adducing nine separative errors of **F** against **R**. I have checked all these passages. At 7.1 **R** has εὔχονται with **F**, not ἔχονται, as Crisci reports; at 32.22 **R** shares τι instead of τε with **F**; at 178.15 **F** has πέμψαι for πλεῦσαι, but the correct reading πλεῦσαι in **R** is also added by the later correcting hand in **F** (as Crisci reports himself); at 179.14 **F** has ἐλεφαντίνου for

The offspring of **F** can be divided into three groups. First, the lost common ancestor of Laurentianus CS 155 (**S**) (with its derivative Laurentianus 69.26 [**G**]) and Lugdunensis BPG 73D (**L**); then, the lost common ancestor of Laurentianus 69.27 (**H**) and Venetus Marcianus gr. 391 (coll. 856, **Y**), which is the source of Venetus Marcianus gr. 392 (coll. 837, **Z**); finally, the lost common source of Vaticanus gr. 1016 (**R**) and Vratislaviensis, BU, Rehd. 39 (**V**; lost in World War II). Each of the three descendants of **F** is characterized by conjunctive errors, which have separative value against **F** and against the other derivatives of **F**. First I will quote some readings peculiar to **SGL**:

- 57.13 ἀπολαβοῦσαν] ἀπολαβοῦσα
 82.24 ἀγέλη om.
 125.23 διελέχθη] διειλέχθη
 127.4 ἐπεφθέγγετο] ἀπεφθέγγετο
 167.11 ναύμαχον] ναύαρχον
 190.29 ἄνθρωπον] ἄνδρα
 208.11 μὲν om.
 212.15 χθὲς om.
 215.26 ἐτέρας] ἡμετέρας
 256.32 ἀναφύεται] ἀνεφύετο
 281.10 ἐν om.
 296.29 τὸ om. (add. **S**^{2st})
 297.1 αὐτὸ] αὐτὸν (non ita **G**)
 302.22 ἐκείνη] ἐκείνης (non ita **G**)

Here are some characteristic readings of **HY**:

- 2.3 ἡ om.
 21.13 τε om.

ἐλέφαντος, but it has escaped Crisci's attention that the corrector of **F** added ος above the line, which explains **R**'s reading ἐλέφαντος; similarly, at 179.23 **R**'s correct reading ὑμῖν against ἡμῖν of **F** is anticipated by a minute υ added by the corrector of **F**; at 181.13 **F** has ἐξασκεῖσθαι for **R**'s ἐξασκεῖς, but this reading is also added in **F** by the corrector; again, at 186.29 **R**'s correct reading ἐγὼ against ἄγω of **F** is added by **F**'s corrector; at 190.26, finally, Crisci reports that **F** reads κελεύω for κελεύεις, but this is not true: in reality there is some damage in **F** between κελεύ and εις. All in all, there remains only one putative separative error of **F** against **R**, namely 183.14 ἡμεῖς (**R** *recte*) for ὑμεῖς (**F**): but we can safely assume that the scribe of **R** was able to correct the reading he found in **F** ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς γε ὅσι' ἂν πρᾶττοιτε.

23.19	βασανιῶ σε] βασανιῶδες
52.26	πρίαιο] πρίαιτο
63.23–24	τοσοῦτοι-ἄν om.
136.21	Ἑλένη] ἑλένη εἶπεν
138.22	ἐξείργων] ἐξεῖργον
206.18	ὑπὲρ] περὶ
206.19	αὐτὸν om.
213.14	τῷ] καὶ τῷ
218.2	βύβλου] βίβλου
309.10	ποτε ἡμῖν] ἡμῖν τοτὲ
311.28	τὸν δὲ] ἀλλὰ τὸν
313.32	τὼ Ἰωνε] τῷ Ἴωνι
317.25	ὦν om.

And here are some characteristic readings of **R** and **V**, which separate them from the others:

45.22	ἐμαντοῦ] ἐμαντῷ
55.2	οὐδενὶ] οὐδὲν
57.21	εἰ] οἱ
125.2	ἐαυτῶν] αὐτῶν
128.7	ἰδιον] ἴδιον
141.20	οὐδὲ] οὐ
209.21	τουτονὶ] τοῦτον
213.26	οὐ om.
220.4	τοῖς] τῆς
221.22	ἀπαξιοῦσιν] ἄξιοῦσιν
299.19	ἐπωνυμία τιμᾶται om.
302.21–330.2	μηδ' -ῆτε om.

In a number of places, there are traces of contamination between **RV**²³ and **Y** (for which see below). In the sample passages collated by me, I have noted the following cases:

²³ In the places marked with an asterisk Kayser reports that **R**'s reading also occurs in **V**. In the places where this is not the case, it is possible that Jacobs failed to notice a variant reading in **V**.

*53.29	πύργους] πύργοις
54.8	τῶν] τὸν (non ita Y)
126.16	πυροὺς] πυρροὺς
126.25	ὁρᾶτε] ὁρᾶται
132.7	τοὺς om.
*204.25	αὐταῖς] αὐτοῖς
*206.22	εἶναί τις] τις εἶναι
*207.29	δαιμόνων] θεῶν
*209.26	ὄς] οὐς
*212.12	ἔχω] ἔχων
*214.9	ἀπεσήμαινε] ἀπεσήμηνε
214.11	αὐτῶν] αὐτὸν
*223.18	ποτε οἱ θεοὶ] οἱ θεοὶ ποτὲ
*297.20	καὶ om.
*299.9	τοῦ om.

Crisci notes thirteen cases of agreement between **R(V)** and **Y** in the passages collated by him. In addition he remarks that in book VII he has not found one single case of agreement between **Y** and **H**; in my sample passages from books VI and VIII, however, there are sufficient cases of agreement between **YZ** and **H** to justify their stemmatical relationship.

It is hard to settle in which direction the contamination between **R(V)** and **Y** has taken place. There is a slight indication that **R(V)** was the source of contamination: at 3.29 **R** has τῶν for τε; **Y** reads τῆς, with ων written above the line.

S and **L** both have separative errors of their own, which shows that they are gemelli. Here are some readings of **S**:

50.2	ἐλάσαι] ἐλθόντα
52.26	δὴ om.
58.22	ὀλίγω] ὀλίγον
58.28	ἐπομένοις] ἐπομένους
126.15	ὥλισθεν] ὥλισθησεν
129.9	ἐς om.
136.23	ἔφη om.
140.4	καταβαλῶ] καταλαβὼν
207.31	γε] τε
211.5	τῆς om.

220.32	Ἰνδῶν] τῶν ἰνδῶν
221.15	σοφία] σοφίαν
308.26–27	ἡ ἐσθῆς] ἐσθήτος
316.21	χρηστὸν] χρήσιμον

And here are some readings of **L**:

47.4	ἀνελθοῦσιν] ἀπελθοῦσιν
48.14	ἡγήσω με] ἡγήσωμαι
55.3	ἐκπεσών] πεσών
57.21	ὄντες] ὄντες καὶ
127.13	Σμύρναν] σμύρναν καὶ
129.7	ἐπιστατείας] ἐπιστρατίας
132.6	Ἑκτορα] νέστορα
133.32	ἐνθα] ἐνταῦθα
205.15	τῆς om.
212.17	γὰρ om.
216.32	χρήσαιτο] χρήσεται
224.1	αἵρεσθαι om.
302.31–32	τι νῦν] τοίνυν
310.28	πεπαμένων] πεπραμένων
317.10	τὸ om.

At the end of the *Vita Apollonii* (at the beginning of p. 306 of Kayser's edition) the scribe of **S** appears to have switched to another exemplar. Up to p. 306, **S** agrees with **F** (and **FQ**); some instances:

301.30	ἀκροασομένοις] ἀκροασαμένοις FQS
302.24	καὶ χρυσῇ γῇ καὶ ἀνδρῶν ὄχλος] καὶ ἀνδρῶν ὄχλος καὶ χρυσῇ γῇ FQS
303.5	αὐτῶν] ἄν FS
304.26	ἀνάγκασον] ἀναγκάσαι FQS
305.5	οὔτε] οὐδὲ FS
305.18	νόμων] νόμου FQS

But from p. 306 on **S** no longer follows **FQ** and **F**; see for instance:

306.9	γὰρ alterum habet S : om. FQ
306.17	τὸ habet S : τοῦ FQ

- 308.15 Εὐφορβος habet **S**: εὐφορβον **F**
 309.27 ἀναφαίνονται habet **S**: ἀναφύονται **FQ**
 315.2 λοιμοῦ habet **S**: τοῦ λοιμοῦ **F**

The only case of agreement between **S** and **FQ** I have found after p. 306 is 314.32 γὰρ om. The new source of **S** is related to **A**; see for instance:

- 310.11 καὶ om.
 310.16 ἀπέστειλα] ἐπέστειλα **A**^{1st} **S**^{1st}
 314.25 τε om.
 315.4 δοκεῖ] δοκῇ
 315.26 φησιν] φήσ
 318.16 ἀνδρὶ προέμενός ποτε **EMP**: ἀνδρὶ ποτε προέμενος
AS: ποτε ἀνδρὶ προέμενος **FQL**: ποτε ἀνδρὶ προθέμενος
 (sic) **HYZ**

An interesting case is found at 316.22: here **S** reads εὐήθως τι καὶ μωρῶς διαπραξόμενον after οἶδα in the text; **A** has these words in the margin. But **A** itself cannot be the source of **S**, because **A** has separative errors against **S**; some instances:

- 307.27 ἔθηξαν] ἔθηξεν
 310.6 αἰτίας] τῆς αἰτίας
 311.7 χρώματα] χρήματα

Further, the end of **VA** is missing in **A**. Accordingly, **S** has to be regarded as a primary source, related to **A**, from p. 306 on.

In many places **S** has been corrected by a later hand. The source of these corrections is to be sought in the neighbourhood of **PM**; see for instance:

- 43.10 ψάλιον] ψέλιον **S**^{2pc} **PM**
 48.17 ἀποβαλόντι] ἀποβάλλοντι **S**^{2pc} **EPM**
 204.19 τῶν Ἰνδῶν] τῶ Ἰνδῶ **S**^{2pc} **PM**
 302.24 ὄν] ὦν **S**^{2pc} **PM**

Other corrections probably result from conjecture, as they are not found elsewhere; some instances:

132.22	ἐαυτοῦ] σεαυτοῦ S ^{2pc}
209.10	γινώσκω] γινώσκω S ^{ac} : γινώσκων S ^{2pc}

G (the source of the Aldine edition) derives from **S**: it takes over all its errors and adds a number of errors of its own. Here are some instances of separative errors of **G**:

46.14	ἴσως om.
46.29	γλαυκότερον] γλαυκότεροι
52.9	τηλικόνδε] τηλικόν τε
54.12	λέγοντα] λέγοντες
126.21	δρόμω] δρόμων
135.2	πρόγονος] πρόξενος
141.5	λέγω] λέγων
212.2	δῖς] δις ἔφη
213.12	δείξας-Θεσπεσίων om.
300.22–23	τὸ σῶμα om.
302.5	δαίμονα] δαιμόνια
312.24	ἴσως] ἴσων

At 223.19–20 **G** omits the words καὶ-ταῖς, which fill exactly one line in **S**. Moreover, **G** reproduces the corrections added in **S** by a later hand (for which see above), which is additional proof for the dependence of **G** on **S**.

In book VIII, there are indications that **G** drew upon (a congener of) **Q** as a secondary source; some instances:

304.19	πείθοντες] πείσαντες
304.22	φοιτώσης] φοιτῶσιν
306.31	ῶν] ὄν
312.29	ἥ] καὶ
313.7	τάττωμεν] τάττομεν
314.7	ἤκουεν] ἤκουσαν (ἤκουσεν G ^{1st})
316.8	τί] τίς
316.12	πρώην] πρὶν
316.32	ἐνεθυμήθη] ἐνεθυμήτην

Crisci (pp. 17–18; pp. 125–135) gives a minute discussion of the text in **S** and **G** after 332.16 κἀργόθεν, where **S** breaks off. He quotes eleven

cases of agreement between **G** and **Q** in the final part of book VIII; some instances:

- 336.25 ἡ Ἑλλάς] ἡκιᾶς
 337.32 εἶπεῖν om.
 343.9 σπουδάσαν] σπουδασάντων

Crisci plausibly concludes that in the final part of book VIII the scribe of **G** used a congener of **Q** as his exemplar.

The missing portion of the text of **S** is found in a quaternion presently bound in Laur. CS 73, to which Crisci assigns the siglum **Sa**: this quaternion starts exactly in the place where **S** breaks off. The text of **Sa** was copied from **G**, because **Sa** reproduces all the characteristic readings of **G**, while adding a number of new errors; some instances:

- 332.21 δὴ om.
 336.1–2 οἱ-κλειῖδας om.
 340.9 κτείνοντες] κτείροντες

Moreover, **Sa** was written by the same scribe as **G**.

Within the second group of **F**'s derivatives, **Y** and **H** are gemelli, because **Y** has very many errors against **H**, while **H** too has some errors of its own. First I will mention some readings of **Y**:

- 44.26 οἱ μὲν ἐν ἄνθρω φασίν] φασιν οἱ μὲν ἐν ἄνθρω
 46.11 ἐστηκότα] διεστηκότα
 48.9 ἄν] οὖν
 52.1 ἐπελάσαι] ἐπιλάσαι
 53.9 ἔφη τοῦτο] τοῦτο ἔφη
 127.21 ἐψηφισμένοις] ψηφίσμασιν
 129.6 ἐξοικοδομήσαιτο] ἐξοικονομήσαιτο
 134.5–6 περὶ τὸν κολωνὸν βραχὺς] βραχὺς περὶ τὸν κολωνὸν
 139.3 προστυχεῖν] πρὸς τὸ σχεῖν
 206.7 καὶ-ἐπεκέκτητο om.
 211.11 κινεῖν] κινεῖν μὲν
 217.10 ἀπασῶν ἦν] ἦν ἀπασῶν
 222.30 μαντικῇ] μαντικῆς
 298.15 πληγὰς ἔφη] ἔφη πληγὰς
 308.3 ἡμπίσχετο] ὑπίσχετο

310.2	πότερ'] τῆς
314.12	ἐτέρων] ἐώρων
317.23	βασιλείους] βασιλείας

Here are some separative errors of **H**:

43.25	τοῦ] τῆς
49.12	δὲ] οὖν
52.5	ἀλαλαζόντων] ἀλαλτων
58.12	ἅπασι] ἅπασα
126.21	δρόμῳ] δρόμων
127.19	ἐπίπληξιν] ἔκπληξιν
137.31	ἀνατείναντες] ἀνατείλαντες
141.5	λέγω] λέγων
207.14	γὰρ] γὰρ εἶπεν
214.6	ὕφ' ᾧ om.
218.7	ταῦτα om.
222.10	ἡγεῖτο om.
298.4	ἀπέθανεν] ἀπέφανεν
302.5	ἡγοῦντο] ἡγοῦνται
306.31	ἔτι] ἔτει
308.29	λόγον] λόγων

Z derives from **Y**, because it follows **Y** very closely, and adds an enormous number of errors of its own; some instances:

46.3	ἐκομιζόμεθα] ἐκκομιζόμεθα
47.14	προσελάσας] πελάσας
54.10	χρυσοῦ] χρυσᾶς
58.25	προβλήματα] πρόβλημα
127.12	σωτήριον om.
135.8–10	δεινὸς-ἐδόκει om.
138.19	μνησόμενος] μνησόμενος
142.2	ἐκλείπει] ἐνλείπει
205.5	καὶ alterum om.
207.22	ἀτέγκτου μοίρας] τεγκτουμοίρας
209.32	τούτου] τοῦτον
223.24	κόσμου] κόσμον
299.19–21	ὁ-λόγοις om.

- 304.32 κατακτᾶσθαι] κτᾶσθαι
 314.12 συβάριδος] εὐβάριδος
 316.13 ἀρχῆς] ἀργῆς

In a few places **Z** does not follow **Y** in error; I have noted the following places:

- 43.6 ὀχοούμενοι] ὀρχούμενοι
 46.24 τῷ οὐρανῷ] τοῦ οὐρανῷ (sic)
 56.20 εἵπης] εἵποις
 57.19 τοῦ] τοὺς
 57.26 σῖτον] σίτου, sed ον s.l. prima manus
 58.12 δὲ] δ' ἄρα (δ' ἂν **Z**)
 125.23 διελέχθη] διελέγχθη
 138.19 ὥς] credas ἥς (sic)
 213.15 βαδίσματι] βαδιάματι (nisi fallor)
 217.17 εὐφροσύνας] εὐφροσῆνας
 298.32 τὸν] τῶν, sed ὃν s.l. prima manus
 310.27 ποιμνίων] ποιμνίω

The majority of these errors are so obviously wrong, that they cannot be regarded as separative errors. The only serious ones are 43.6 ὀχοούμενοι] ὀρχούμενοι and 125.23 διελέχθη] διελέγχθη, but these errors too can be emended easily. Crisci (pp. 117–118) lists eleven errors of **Y** against **Z** in all the passages collated by him. But in one case the error of **Y** is in fact also found in **Z** (61.20 καταποντοῦν] καταποτοῦν); and at 12.19–20, where **Y** has δὲ δὴ σὺ for δὲ σὺ, δὴ is deleted by means of a stroke. The other errors are so obvious that anyone could have corrected them conjecturally (for instance 9.12 κέκτηται] κέκτῃνται **Y**). Accordingly, I believe that the places where **Z** does not follow **Y** in error are not sufficient to disprove the hypothesis that **Z** derives from **Y**.

The third derivative of **F** is the common ancestor of **R** and **V**.²⁴ Each of these two MSS has separative errors of its own. First I will list some errors of **R**:

²⁴ Because **V** is now lost, our information on the readings of this MS is based on Kayser's report of Jacobs' collation. The fact that there are numerous places where **V** goes unmentioned in Kayser's apparatus, while all its congeners agree in error, shows that Jacobs' collation cannot be regarded as fully trustworthy.

43.13	προσιόντες] προσιέντες
53.20	ἐπισταίη] ἀπισταίη
57.25	οἰκίσκῳ] κυίσκῳ
125.28	γὰρ om.
127.12	τοῖς] τῆς
134.29	Ὀδυσσέως] ὀδυσσέων
135.32	ἀκμῆς] ἃ ἡμεῖς
205.28–29	καὶ-ποιούμενος om.
212.17	οὗτος] εἷη
297.29	ξυμμετρίᾳ] ξυμμέτρως
298.15	ἀπειλεῖ] ἀπολεῖ
302.1	σύ-αὐτοκράτωρ om.

Here are some instances of readings peculiar to V:

46.16	προσέπεσε] εἰσέπεσε
47.7	ῥττειν] ἄγειν
50.27	ὑπωρείᾳ] ὑπερορεία
56.2	τὸ] τε τὸ
126.2	αὐτὰ] αὐτὸς
130.15	πήραν] πήρας
131.24	τι αὐτῷ] ταὐτῷ
139.21	ἀπεκρίνατο] ἀπεφήνατο
208.25	ἡλίου] ἡλίῳ τε καὶ
213.22	ἐς αὐτὴν] ἐξ αὐτῆς
220.23–24	καὶ-πάντων om.
297.11	δικαστήριον] δεσμωτήριο
298.20	ὃν ἐλέγετο] ὧν ἔλετο
301.12	αὐτοῖ] αἰτίας

All in all, the lost common source of the second family is represented by F, from the end of book IV on accompanied by Q.

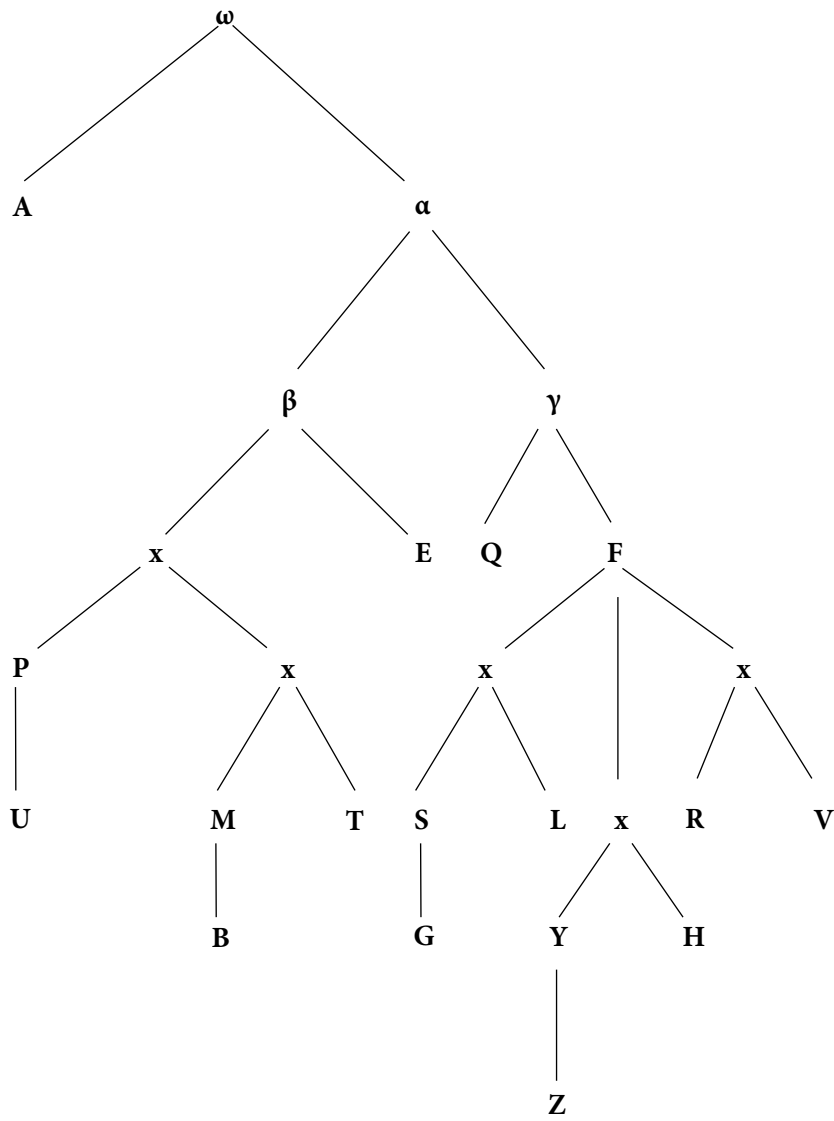


Fig. 1. Stemma Codicum.

IV. *Perspectives for a new edition**Stemmatology and the constitution of the text*

What is to be expected from a study of the text, based on the stemmatic arrangement of the MSS? In the first place, in those passages where **A** differs from the others, both readings will have to be taken into account. Where both readings are equally possible (for instance in matters of word order), there is little to decide and we may settle the matter by throwing up a dime. See for instance 53.4–5 ἕτερον οὖν τι, ἔφη, ὦ Δάμι, ἐστίν, ὃ τὸν ἐλέφαντα τοῦτον ἡνιοχεῖ καὶ πέμπει κτέ; here **α** has ἔφη ὦ δάμι ἐστίν, against **A**'s ἐστίν ἔφη ὦ δάμι.

In the second place, when **A** agrees with either of the two families against the other family, the reading best represented should in principle be chosen, unless it is manifestly wrong. Presently, I will briefly discuss some relevant passages.

A/α (A versus the others)

II 1 (43.10) χρυσοῦν/χρυσοῦ γὰρ ψάλιον ἢ πρώτη κάμηλος ἐπὶ τοῦ μετώπου ἔφερε, “as the leading camel had a gold chain on its brow” (tr. Jones). Kayser accepts **A**'s reading χρυσοῦ ψάλιον, “chain of gold”, while the others have χρυσοῦν ψάλιον, “gold chain”. Both readings are acceptable in themselves, but the adjective is regular in such cases. The final *ny* may easily have fallen out in **A**, especially because it is often indicated by means of a small horizontal stroke above the line.

IV 7 (128.12–13) τὴν δὲ πόλιν, ἧς γεγόνασιν, ἀποφαίνειν τοσαύτην, ὅσοι/ὅσην περ αὐτοὶ γῆν ἐπελθεῖν δύνανται. Apollonius argues that it is the citizens who constitute the essence of the city, not the houses, because noble citizens can travel all over the world and thus bring fame to their city. In the relative clause the MSS are divided between ὅσοι and ὅσην. **A**'s reading ὅσοι is accepted by Kayser and later editors; it means, in Jones' translation, “they made the city of their origin larger in proportion to the number of them that could travel the world”. To my mind, the reading of the others, ὅσην, is superior, “they made the city of their origin as large as the parts of the earth they visited themselves”. My first argument concerns the text itself: with the reading ὅσοι, the pronoun αὐτοί, “themselves”, is redundant, and we would rather expect ὅσοι δ' αὐτῶν, “the number of them” (which is in fact Jones' translation). My second argument regards the meaning: with the reading ὅσοι the enlargement of the city depends on the number of citizens traveling

the world; with the reading ὅσῃν it depends on the parts of the earth visited by the city's citizens; the superiority of the latter is proved by the phrase preceding our sentence, ἄνδρας δὲ ἀγαθοὺς πανταχοῦ μὲν ὀρᾶσθαι, πανταχοῦ δὲ φθέγγεσθαι, in which the word πανταχοῦ points at the parts of the earth visited by the city's citizens, not by the number of those who travel the earth.

IV 8 (129.11–12) τὰ γὰρ πολεμικὰ ἐξεπονεῖτο <σφισιν>/ἐξεπονοῦντο καὶ ἐς τοῦτο ἔρρωντο πάντες καὶ τούτου μόνου ἥπτοντο, “They practiced warfare, and all of them trained for that and made it their only pursuit.” (tr. Jones). When speaking about the Lacedaemonians, Apollonius tells that they practiced warfare, **A** has τὰ πολεμικὰ ἐξεπονεῖτο, the others τὰ πολεμικὰ ἐξεπονοῦντο. Here Kayser has clearly gone too far in his adoration of **A**, because, while maintaining its reading, he is compelled to add σφισι conjecturally, taking the verb as passive with τὰ πολεμικὰ as its subject; moreover, the following two predicates, ἔρρωντο and ἥπτοντο, are in the plural with the Lacedaemonians as their subject. Therefore Jones is certainly right in restoring the reading ἐξεπονοῦντο here.

VI 5 (210.2–5) καὶ ποῦ σοφόν, ὃν στεφανοῦν ἐχρήν, εἰ καὶ προνοήσας ἀπέκτεινε, τοῦτον ἀκουσίου φόνου μὲν/καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δ' εἰργασμένου μὴ καθῆραι; “They should have crowned him even for premeditated murder. How was it wise not to absolve him of unintentional bloodshed from which they profited?” (tr. Jones). Here the situation is very complicated. **A** reads τοῦτον ἀκουσίου φόνου καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰργασμένου μὴ καθῆραι, omitting δ', and reading καὶ for μὲν; **β** has τοῦτον ἀκουσίου μὲν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰργασμένου μὴ καθῆραι, while its gemellus **γ**, adding δ' after αὐτῶν, reads τοῦτον ἀκουσίου μὲν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν δ' εἰργασμένου μὴ καθῆραι. In the first place, the word φόνου, omitted in **α**, appears to be indispensable, and in this respect **A** should be followed. But then the problems start: **β** and **γ** both have μὲν, but **γ** is the only witness to have the corresponding δ'. Now it is obvious that μὲν *solitarium* is impossible here;²⁵ so, if we keep μὲν, we will also have to accept δ', although it is preserved in **γ** alone. This is enough to raise suspicion, but the position of μὲν after φόνου is problematic too; hence Headlam 1895:260 conjectured ἀκουσίου μὲν φόνου for ἀκουσίου φόνου μὲν, a conjecture which has been accepted by Jones.

²⁵ This was also seen by the corrector of **P**, who erased the word.

But on closer inspection I believe that A's καί gives much better sense than μέν...δ': μέν...δ' implies a contrast between the two elements: "a murder, which, though being involuntary, has been committed on their behalf". Such a contrast would be relevant if ἐκουσίου would stand in the position of ἀκουσίου: "a murder, which, though being voluntary, has been committed on their behalf". But at 209.111–12 it is stated explicitly that the killing was involuntary, and this is also implied by 210.3–4 εἰ καὶ προνοήσας ἀπέκτεινε. With A's reading καί there is no contrast, but there are *two* arguments for acquitting the murder from guilt: the killing was unintentional and besides it was to the benefit of the inhabitants of Memphis. Therefore the text of A should be accepted: τοῦτον ἀκουσίου φόνου καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰργασμένου μὴ καθῆραι. In α καὶ was corrupted into μέν; the scribe of γ saw that μέν needed a corresponding δέ, and added it *suo Marte*.

Aβ/γ or Aγ/β (A and one of the families against the other family)

According to the strict rules of stemmatology it is impossible that β or γ alone transmits the authentic reading against its gemellus and A. But we have already seen that there are cases where this rule cannot be applied, for instance at 45.3, where γ preserves the authentic reading πυρφόρα against the obviously wrong reading πυροφόρα of A and β. This shows that an editor should always judge according to circumstances, and never allow strict rules to get the better of him.

II 12 (54.4–5) περὶ δὲ ἡλικίας τοῦ ζώου καὶ ὥς μακροβιώτατοι/μακροβιώτατον, εἴρηται μὲν καὶ ἑτέροις. "The age of the animal and its great length of life have been discussed by others" (tr. Jones). γ has μακροβιώτατοι, which is accepted by Kayser; A and β have μακροβιώτατον, which is manifestly superior, because it congrues with τὸ ζῶον, Jones has correctly restored this reading.

II 14 (56.10–11) ὁρῶ, ἔφη, ὦ Ἀπολλώνιε (...). "I see, he said, Apollo-nius (...)." Here β adds the interjection ὦ before the vocative Ἀπολλώνιε, while A and γ omit it; it is printed in the editions. As Philostratus has no consistent policy in this matter, I would rather omit the interjection here.

IV 16 (137.2) πέμπτον δ' ἡρόμην, "My fifth question was". In the series of questions Apollonius is allowed to ask Achilles, the final question is introduced by means of πέμπτον δ' ἡρόμην in Kayser's edition, a reading found in the first family alone (Kayser found it in P); A and the second family have πέμπτον ἡρόμην, with asyndeton. The parallel with τρίτον

ἡρόμην, which occurs a few lines above (136.21), suggests that the latter reading is authentic; here too Jones has made the good choice.

VI 2 (205.23) καλῶς δ' ἄρ' εἶχεν, ἵνα ὁ πλοῦτος ἀτίμως ἔπραττεν ἰσότης τε ἦνθει, "It was indeed a good time when wealth was in dishonor, equality flourished" (tr. Jones). Here γ has the article ὁ, while Α and β omit it. The fact that ἰσότης too lacks the article strongly suggests that it is better omitted before πλοῦτος as well.

Further, a fresh study of the MSS will make it possible to remove some printing errors in the editions. See for instance II 4 (45.14–17) αὐτός τε ἐλοιδορεῖτο τῇ ἐμπούσῃ, τοῖς τε ἀμφ' αὐτὸν προσέταξε ταῦτο πράττειν, τουτὶ/ταυτὶ γὰρ ἄκος εἶναι τῆς προσβολῆς ταύτης, "Apollonius (...) himself rebuked the vampire and told the others to do the same, since that was the way to counter this attack." (tr. Jones). Kayser 1844 prints τουτὶ, which is found in all the MSS, and which is obviously correct, because it refers to ἐλοιδορεῖτο alone; in Kayser 1870 we find ταυτὶ instead, which (understandably) persists in Conybeare and Jones.

Conjectural emendation

The text of VA has been corrected by means of conjecture in many places. Between Kayser's 1844 and 1870 editions, many conjectures were proposed by Cobet and Westermann. Kayser 1870 accepts a number of these, but rejects many conjectures worthy of being printed in the text. He goes to great lengths to explain his reasons for rejecting many conjectures by Cobet in the preface to his 1870 edition, pp. VIII–XXIII. But in many cases a reading proposed by Cobet and rejected by Kayser should certainly be accepted. To give just one instance: VI 11 (220.27–29) σοφίας δὲ ταύτης ἐγένεσθε μὲν καὶ αὐτοὶ Πυθαγόρα ξύμβουλοι χρόνον, ὃν τὰ Ἰνδῶν ἐπηρεῖτε, Ἰνδοὶ τὸ ἀρχαῖον πάλαι ὄντες, "You yourselves supported Pythagoras in this wisdom so long as you spoke well of the Indians, since you too were originally Indians." (tr. Jones). Cobet rightly saw that the collocation τὸ ἀρχαῖον πάλαι is tautologous: πάλαι is an obvious gloss on τὸ ἀρχαῖον.²⁶ As a parallel for τὸ ἀρχαῖον πάλαι Kayser 1870:XXI adduces Lys. 6.51 ἱερεῖαι καὶ ἱερεῖς στάντες κατηράσαντο πρὸς ἐσπέραν καὶ φοινικίδας ἀνέσεισαν, κατὰ τὸ νόμιμον τὸ παλαιὸν

²⁶ It is often believed that glosses are only added in the case of obscure words. This is not true: a glance at any edition of scholia shows that there are many glosses on words which look perfectly familiar to us. See for instance *sch. Soph. Aj.* 16 φώνημα] ἀντὶ τοῦ φωνήν; *sch. Xen. An.* 1,3,3 ξένος] ἀντὶ τοῦ φίλος.

καὶ ἀρχαῖον, “priestesses and priests stood up and cursed him, facing the west, and shook out their purple vestments according to the ancient and time-honoured custom.” (tr. Lamb). But the parallel is not conclusive. The Lysias passage has a deliberately solemn ring; moreover, in the Lysias passage the two elements are linked by means of καί, which makes all the difference. Jones therefore rightly prints πάλαι between square brackets.

Since Kayser’s 1870 edition, numerous conjectures by Reiske and Valckenaer were made accessible in two articles by C. Schenkl.²⁷ A few conjectures were made by scholars as Richards, Radermacher and Headlam. The most important source for conjectures, however, is John Jackson’s copy of vol. I of Conybeare’s Loeb edition; Jackson wrote his notes in minute but very clear pencil script. Unfortunately, his notes suddenly stop at V 21.²⁸ The book is in the possession of Professor Robert Parker of New College, Oxford. Jones has printed many of Jackson’s conjectures in his text; but inspection of the volume itself shows that there are more treasures hidden in the margin. For instance, at I 3 (4.6–7) we read τῷ γὰρ Νινίῳ σαφῶς μέν, οὐ μὴν δεξιῶς γε ἀπηγγέλλετο, “since the style of the man from Ninos was clear but rather unskillful” (tr. Jones). The imperfect ἀπηγγέλλετο is out of place here, because the book by Damis had already been written long ago; and Julia is supposed to refer to the book in the form in which she knew it, not to the process of writing by Damis. Jackson plausibly suggested reading the pluperfect ἀπήγγελο.²⁹

Jones’ recent edition contains a lot more conjectures than previous editions. But it is probable that in many places the diagnosis that the text is corrupt has not yet been made, so that a fitting therapy still remains to be invented. Again, let me give one instance. In I 4–6 (4.19–5.32) Philostratus tells the tale of Apollonius’ birth. After the dream about Proteus, the swans and the thunderbolt, Philostratus tells the story of the fountain of Zeus Asbamaeus (5.21–30). Then, after the description

²⁷ See Schenkl 1892 and 1893.

²⁸ Jackson’s acumen in emending Greek texts is amply shown in his deservedly famous *Marginalia Scaenica*, posthumously edited by Eduard Fraenkel.

²⁹ For the pluperfect of ἀγγέλλω denoting a completed state of affairs see for instance Aesch., *De Falsa Legatione* 34 καὶ γὰρ πρὸς αὐτὸν τὸν Φίλιππον, ὡς ἦν ὕστερον ἀκούειν, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐταίρους αὐτοῦ ἐξήγγελο ἢ τῶν ἐπαγγελιῶν ὑπερβολή.; Arr. *Anab.* 5.24.7 οἱ δὲ (ἤδη γὰρ ἐξήγγελο αὐτοῖς κατὰ κράτος ἐαλωκότα πρὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου τὰ Σάγγαλα) φοβεροὶ γενόμενοι ἔφρουγον ἀπολιπόντες τὰς πόλεις.

of the fountain, he states that the locals say that Apollonius is the son of Zeus, which is a fourth element related to Apollonius' birth: οἱ μὲν δὴ ἐγγώριοί φασι παῖδα τοῦ Διὸς τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον γεγονέναι, ὁ δ' ἀνὴρ Ἀπολλωνίου ἐαυτὸν καλεῖ, "Now the locals say that Apollonius was the son of Zeus, but the Master calls himself 'son of Apollonius.'" (tr. Jones). This is the text of the MSS, and of all the editions. As the text stands, however, the whole anecdote about Zeus Asbamaeus falls outside the scope of the birth-tale. I think that it can get its organic place if we add <τούτου> before τοῦ Διὸς at 5.30: "the locals say that Apollonius was a son of <this> Zeus" (that is, Zeus Asbamaeus).³⁰ And there probably are many other as yet undetected corruptions in the text.

³⁰ In fact, Phillimore and Conybeare both do translate "a son of this Zeus", but Conybeare did not take the trouble to print <τούτου> in his text.

QUOTATION OF EARLIER TEXTS IN ΤΑ ΕΣ ΤΟΝ ΤΥΑΝΕΑ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΝ

EWEN BOWIE

This paper has modest objectives, which might perhaps be thought an inappropriate way to approach a work of literature whose objectives were extremely ambitious. I want to explore the contribution made to the overall effect of Philostratus' *VA* by its citation of and allusion to earlier literary texts—which for a Greek writer of the 230s CE of course means earlier Greek literary texts. I do this in the expectation that this will help us understand better how Philostratus wanted to position his generically ambiguous τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον, and how he tried to construct (or reconstruct) its hero Apollonius. In the Roman world of Greek πεπαιδευμένοι quotation was one of the important techniques of self-definition,¹ though it has not, as far as I know, been much investigated:² this essay is therefore a sample of how such investigations might be conducted. I shall draw attention to the distribution of quotations in the 8-book work and comment on the range of authors who are cited. In an appendix are printed two tables, one of which sets out quotations and allusions in the order in which they are encountered by a reader—or at least a reader who starts reading the work at the beginning and continues to do so until the end—and another which arranges quotations by the author cited (in alphabetical order). The decision on what should go into the tables has not always been straightforward. Citation or allusion can take several different forms:

- (1) The text may both name an author and quote words or lines, as it does in the first attributed quotation in the book, the lines of Empedocles cited at I 1.

¹ Surprisingly, however, there is no Greek word for 'quote' corresponding to the Latin *citare*: λέγει and similar words do service both for primary utterance and for quotation.

² Nothing, for example, in Gleason (1995). For discussion of citations of early elegiac and iambic poetry in Plutarch see Bowie (1997) and in Athenaeus Bowie (2000); for a broader discussion on the difference in Plutarch's habits of quotation between *Moralia* and *Lives* see Bowie (forthcoming).

- (2) The text may name a single literary work, like Sophocles' *Paean to Asclepius* at III 17, but not quote any words. The reader is expected to recognise the work's title and perhaps supply some of the content.
- (3) The text may name some part, or all, of an author's corpus, as when we read in I 30 that the hymn to Artemis of Perge by the Pamphylian Damophyle was based on poems of Sappho.³
- (4) Something analogous is happening in such cases as that where reference may be made to more than one place in an author's work. Thus when Apollonius invokes Homer's presentation of Achilles, Ajax, and Nireus at III 19 the reference to Achilles and Ajax is presumably to the many places in the *Iliad* where they are praised, whereas that to Nireus can only be to *Iliad* 2.671–4.
- (5) The text may quote words which on the basis of our own knowledge we can be confident are drawn from an earlier, usually canonical, work, but no explicit hint is given in the text that this is a quotation. Context or other factors sometimes allow us to decide that Philostratus expected the quotation to be recognised: so, for example, the capacity of drunkenness to make us think we see two suns and two moons—perhaps an unnoticed advertisement for Belgian beer—is certainly an allusion to Euripides' *Bacchae* 918–9. The certainty is based partly on the number of other allusions to that play in the VA, as the tables demonstrate.
- (6) The text may narrate events that Philostratus and his readers, like us, most probably know chiefly from a particular earlier text, and we may guess that Philostratus expected his readers to know that this was his source, but he seems to put nothing in his text that pushes them in the direction of seeing this.

To make my tables more intelligible I have not tried to mark all these distinctions. Instead I have, perhaps misleadingly, sorted the citations and allusions into just two groups: one, where the author's name is given in the text; the other where it is not: in this latter group the author's name, whether that is certain or only probable, is put in parentheses.

I have also omitted from the table *nominatim* references to canonical figures where no quotation of or allusion to their writings is apparent: an example of this is the reference to Anaxagoras and Thales at II 5. Such references undoubtedly have an impact to some degree similar to

³ I 30: τὰ τοι ἐς τὴν Ἄρτεμιν καὶ παρόδεται αὐτῇ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν Σαπφούς ῥίσται.

that of quotations, and a full study of this sort of phenomenon would have to take them into account.

Another feature of the first table that sometimes involves simplification is its final column: this distinguishes between citation by the narrator (N), by Apollonius (A) and by other characters (whose names are printed without abbreviation). This will only occasionally become complicated, e.g. when the same author or quotation is presented by or divided between the narrator and a character, as in the citation of the *Hippolytus* of Euripides at VI 3.

Distribution of quotations between books

The tables register some 138 citations or allusions, an average of almost 18 per book. They are not, however, evenly distributed. The first three books do not diverge substantially from that average of 18: Book I has 19, Book II has 15, Book III has 14. In Book IV the number rises to 24, but much of this is Homeric material, not explicitly assigned to Homer by Philostratus, and drawn in by his narrative of Apollonius' interview with Achilles. Book V has a much lower figure, only 12, of which just one is a quotation which names its author (Aristotle *Politics* 1284a17 at V 36). There is also, however, a quotation from Euripides which identifies him simply as ὁ ποιητής: πολλὰ μορφὰ τῶν δαιμονίων, at V 14, picked up at V 15 by the last line of the Euripidean sequence τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τὸ...πρῶγμα (I have treated these as two citations, not one). Book VI returns to a figure very near the average, with 18 citations or allusions. Book VII is similar to Book IV, with the highest total for any book, 29: again Homeric material is the chief contributor, without so obvious an explanation for some of the Homeric allusions as we find in book IV. Finally Book VIII drops to a similar low figure as that of Book V: it has only 10 quotations, of which five are from the great speech of defence which Philostratus composed for Apollonius (VIII 7) and which he asserts was not delivered.

What seems to me of interest here is the evenness rather than unevenness of distribution between the books, though perhaps the high number of Homeric quotations and allusions in Book VII should be seen as contributing to an elevation of Apollonius' heroic status as his final confrontation with Domitian looms.

That evenness is also apparent in another respect, that is, the range of authors cited. As table 2 shows, Homer is predictably the most cited author, with citations or allusions in every book, 46 in all. Next come

Herodotus with some 13 and Euripides and Plato each with 12. Herodotus is exploited in all books except Book II and Book III, though he is never named. Euripides is cited or alluded to in Books II, IV, V, VI and VII, named in three of these places, and identified simply as the poet, ὁ ποιητής, in a fourth (V 14–15). Plato is cited or alluded to in Books I, III, IV, V, VI and VII, and three of these citations name him (IV 36, VI 11, VI 22). Next comes Sophocles: of seven or eight quotations, four are attributed to him by name (at III 17, IV 38, VII 4, VIII 7), and in addition his play *Antigone* is mentioned by name at IV 39. It should be asked why such a high proportion of the citations name Sophocles. Finally there is a clutch of earlier authors cited either four times—Thucydides, never named; three times—Archilochus, twice by name (II 7, VII 26) and once probably alluded to, at II 36; or just a couple of times—Aeschylus, Ctesias, Empedocles, Iuba of Mauretania (!), Pindar; perhaps Stesichorus and Xenophon. Finally there is a handful of authors cited only once: Aesop, Demosthenes, Epicurus, Favorinus, Heraclitus, Nearchus, Orthagoras, Pythagoras, Sappho and Scylax.

What seems to me striking about this assemblage is its relative conventionality, and within that conventionality a clear preference for the serious and philosophical. Getting on for half of the citations or allusions are to Homer, Herodotus, Euripides and Plato. Perhaps those to Herodotus should be discounted, since as I noted above he is not actually named at all, and his repeated use is often to provide scene-setting for Apollonius' eastward journey. Moreover although Sophocles is cited only six times, four of these citations name him, and they, together with the explicit reference to his *Antigone* at IV 39, treat him as a weighty authority. So Philostratus' big guns are, rather, Homer, Sophocles, Euripides and Plato; all highly respected in the context of moral philosophical argument.⁴ To the poets who are seen as giving weight we should perhaps add Aeschylus, since as well as the three citations (at II 3, IV 39 and VIII 7) we should also take account of Apollonius' discussion of the stagecraft of Aeschylus (at VI 11) perhaps to be read as a *mise en abîme* of Philostratus' own literary procedures.

Weight is also contributed, of course, by citation of other philosophers—Empedocles, Epicurus, Pythagoras and even, perhaps, Favorinus—and of the other poets drawn upon by Philostratus, Archilochus, Stesichorus

⁴ Cf. for example their citation in Plutarchus, *De audiendis poetis*.

and Pindar. The unnamed use of Ctesias (if correctly diagnosed) and the naming of Nearchus, Orthagoras and (dismissively) Scylax offer support to the writer's claim to good knowledge of the eastern territories through which Apollonius travelled, and the reference to Juba adds an air of scientific assiduity.⁵ The only author cited who might be thought to be lightweight is Sappho, but it may be important that it is to her hymnic poetry that specific reference is made at I 30. Another factor relevant to this reference to Sappho's poetry is the particular function of Apollonius' conversation with Damis in which she is introduced: Apollonius is intent on demonstrating to Vardanes that he is not in any way impressed by the splendours of his palace. To absorb himself in a discussion of a literary corpus to which in general he seems unlikely otherwise to have given much attention is an even better way of doing this than having him discuss a figure like Pythagoras or Empedocles who is closer to his heart.

There are surprising absences: Menander, for example, clearly an author widely read in this period, much quoted in Plutarch's *Moralia*, and a poet one of whose lines used to be cited by Scopelian of Clazomenae, according to *Lives of the sophists* 1.21.518.⁶ Indeed Old Comedy is almost absent too: the only possible allusion is the reference to σκιάποδες at III 45, cf. *Birds* 1553, but it may be that Philostratus' only intertext here is Scylax, to whom he ascribes σκιάποδες and the like in III 47. Again the contrast with Plutarch is striking: there Old Comedy is used both in *Moralia* and in *Lives*.

We also miss some other poets who, on the evidence of papyri, are read in this period and sometimes cited in serious texts: there is no Theognis, no Anacreon, not a single Hellenistic poet, certainly nobody as discreditable as Hipponax.⁷

The selection in general, then, presents the narrator and his narrative as serious and philosophical. Both narrator and narrative are closer to

⁵ For Philostratus' parade of learning, especially in 'scientific' digressions, see Rommel (1923).

⁶ Despite Menander being quoted around 50 times in Plutarch's *Moralia*, however, he is quoted only two or three times in *Lives*: *Alex.* 17.7 (for a historical point), *Alcibiades Sync.* 2.5 (for décor).

⁷ With these absences we may compare some poets cited by Plutarch in the *Moralia* but not in the *Lives*: these include Agathon, Alcaeus, Euenus, Euphorion, Hipponax, Nicander, Parmenides, Philemon and Xenophanes.

those of Plutarch's *Moralia* than to those of his *Lives* in their texture⁸—and quite different from those of Lucian, keen to spread a veneer of learning, or of Athenaeus, intent on demonstrating wide reading and familiarity with non-central texts. One element of the intertextuality in the VA also has a special function: the many *Odyssean* intertexts prompt us to compare and contrast the life-pattern of Apollonius and different stages in it with that of Odysseus, especially in his Homeric *Nostos*, and to compare Philostratus' own narrative with that of the *Odyssey*.⁹

In this context I want to refer briefly to another type of intertextuality which may be meant to guide our interpretation. The discussion of tyranny and of opposition to tyrants at the beginning of Book VII seems to me to evoke the discussion of political systems that opens the *Cyropaedia* of Xenophon, like the VA an eight-book work offering the exemplary life of a charismatic figure from East of the Halys. If the opening of book VII does indeed set out to recall the *Cyropaedia*, then it may be that Philostratus the Athenian is asking his readers to appreciate his exploitation of a format pioneered by another Athenian, Xenophon,¹⁰ and perhaps even to contrast it with the direction in which non-Athenian novelists such as Chariton had taken that template.¹¹ A similar broadly-based intertextuality might be claimed between the speeches of advice to Vespasian, opening up issues of monarchy and democracy, delivered by the three Greek philosophers Apollonius, Dio and Euphrates at V 32–36 and the debate on how Persia should be governed conducted by the conspirators Otanes, Megabyzus and Dareius at Herodotus 3.80–83.1, likewise a debate with three speakers.¹²

I now return to another aspect of the way quotations and allusions are distributed between the 8 books: whether they occur in author narrative, in the mouth of Apollonius, or in the mouth of another character. Here there is progression, not evenness; the data are set out below:

⁸ Thus is brought out well by one example of citation, Juba, cited indeed in some of Plutarch's *Lives*, but strikingly 5 times in *Roman Questions*.

⁹ This subject has been well discussed by Gert-Jan van Dijk in a paper delivered in the Netherlands and in Oxford and soon to appear in Bowie and Elsner (forthcoming).

¹⁰ For the relation of the VA to the *Cyropaedia* see Anderson 1986:231–232.

¹¹ Note Philostratus' attack on a Chariton (whom I take to be the novelist) in *Letter* 66.

¹² This has, of course, been observed before, cf. Flinterman 1995:194.

	<i>Narrator</i>	<i>Apollonius</i>	<i>Another</i>
Book I	12	6	1 Vardanes
Book II	7	4	2 Damis, 2 Phraotes
Book III	7	5	2 Iarchas
Book IV	7	16, including 4 in which Apollonius quotes Achilles	1 Philolaus (and 4 with 'words' of Achilles)
Book V	2	10	–
Book VI	2	14	1 Thespesion, 1 Nilus
Book VII	8	15	3 Demetrius, 3 Damis
Book VIII	4	6	–

The reversal of dominant roles is very clear: in the first three books the narrator has 26 quotations or allusions as against Apollonius' 15: there is a sharp switch in Book IV which is maintained until the end of the work. One product of this pattern is that we gradually establish the narrator in the first three books as serious, philosophical and skilled in drawing on canonical texts; then we come to realize that the hero is formed in the same mould, and he instead of the narrator becomes the primary bearer of this particular brand of Greek cultural identity. We may or may not choose to decide that (paradoxically) his Indian education has been a turning point.

The homogeneity of the culture of narrator and hero comes out in more than one way. It emerges, for example, at IV 32 where both narrator and Apollonius are familiar (as of course is the young Callicratidas) with the historical tradition on the battle of Arginusae (probably chiefly Xenophon's *Hellenica*); and at VI 3, where both know the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus (probably from Euripides' *Hippolytus stephanephoros*).

More surprising is the ability of non-Greeks to play the same game: the kings Vardanes and Phraotes, the wise men Iarchas and Thespesion, even (at VI 16) the impetuous, Alcibiades-like young Nilus. Some might wish to argue that this shows that Philostratus does not pay much attention to who is quoting or alluding: to me it seems rather to be part of his representation of Hellenism as something that can be found in some manifestation everywhere if only one looks hard enough: ἀνδρὶ σοφῷ Ἑλλὰς πάντα. An important qualification is that no Roman emperor or official is allowed to quote or allude to a Greek text.

There are of course cases in which it is as important where in the work something is said as by whom it is said. I give only one or two examples.

I regard the opening sequence of quotations in Book I as carrying special weight. The first sentence refers to admirers of Pythagoras, setting up a group to which Philostratus' work on Apollonius will make him analogous; then we read quotations attributed to Empedocles, to Homer on Proteus, to Heraclitus and to Pythagoras. Interlaced with these attributed quotations are two Platonic allusions that are not attributed: at I 12 Apollonius is described by the phrase ταυρηδὸν ὑποβλέψας, drawn from a well-known description of Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo* 117b;¹³ in the next chapter, I 13, Philostratus refers to the ageing Sophocles' self-congratulatory remark (again alluded to at VII 31) on escaping the savage despot of sexual desire, probably known to Philostratus and his readers from Plato *Republic* 329c. This nexus of quotations in the first third of Book I prepares us for a work that will present a philosophical figure of the stamp of Pythagoras or Empedocles rather than, e.g. Aristotle or Chrysippus, and, as Philostratus says explicitly at I 13, a philosopher who went further than Pythagoras in rejecting his sexuality.

The opening allusions of Book II may also be specially significant: they are to Prometheus bound on the mountain in the Caucasus (II 3). The myth could be known from mythographic handbooks, but some readers, at least, will know it from the 5th century *Prometheus* trilogy ascribed in antiquity to Aeschylus. The representation of Prometheus in the *Vinctus* as a brave martyr resisting an evil tyrant introduces an important *Leitmotiv* for the VA.

The last quotation of all, towards the end of Book VIII, also inevitably has special force. We should be impressed by the coup de théâtre whereby Philostratus contrives that these last quoted words should in fact be Apollonius' own: they are his six hexameters in which after his death he set out the true doctrine of the immortality of the soul to a hitherto sceptical young fan to whom alone he appeared in a dream (VIII 31):

ἀθάνατος ψυχὴ καὶ χρήμα σόν, ἀλλὰ προνοίης,
ἢ μετὰ σῶμα μαρνανθέν, ἅτ' ἐκ δεσμών θοὸς ἵππος,
ῥηιδίως προθοροῦσα κεράννυται ἥρι κούφω,
δεινὴν καὶ πολύτλητον ἀποστέρξασα λατρείην.
σοὶ δὲ τί τῶνδ' ὄφελος, ὅ ποτ' οὐκέτ' ἔων τότε δόξεις;
ἢ τί μετὰ ζυφοῖσιν ἔων περὶ τῶνδε ματεύεις;

¹³ Plato's own phrase is presumably calqued on the Homeric formula τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν..., used of several heroes (Achilles, *Iliad* 1.148 etc., Diomedes, *Iliad* 4.411 etc., Odysseus, *Iliad* 4.349 etc.).

Standing about as far from the end of Book VIII as the citation of Empedocles stands from the opening of Book I, these hexameters form a ring-composition which encourages us to see Apollonius as a sort of Empedocles, uttering poetry with a philosophical timbre, and almost answering I 1 χαίρετ', ἐγὼ δ' ὕμιν θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θνητός. The last line—ἢ τί μετὰ ζῳοῖσιν ἐὼν περὶ τῶνδε ματεύεις;—can also be read as Philostratus telling his readers that he has said the last word on Apollonius: no further research is appropriate.

Table 1: Philostratus Apollonius: citations by order (unsignalled citations in brackets)

Unnamed biographers (?) of Pythagoras	1.1.3	N
Empedocles frs. 112.11 DK and 117.1 DK	1.1.3 cf. 8.7.18	N
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 4.365ff	1.4 Proteus (cf. 3.24.1)	N
Heraclitus	1.9.2	N
(?Sophocles <i>Oedipus tyrannus</i> 1269–70)	1.10.2	N
(Plato <i>Phaedo</i> 117b)	1.12.2 (ταυρηδὼν ὑποβλέψας)	N
Pythagoras	1.13.3	N
(Plato <i>Republic</i> 329c)	1.13.3 cf. 7.31.2	N
	Sophocles on sex	
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 20.18)	1.14.2	A
(?Herodotus 1.114.2)	1.21.1 βασιλέως ὀφθαλμός	N
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 2.301–330	1.22.2 cf. Damis at 1.40	A
(?Herodotus 6.99–101 and Plato <i>Laws</i> 698d)	1.23.2 (the Eretrians) again 1.36.1	A
(?Herodotus 6.119: λέγεται)	1.23.2 (the pitch well)	A
anon (?Philostratus) also found AP 7.256	1.24.2	N
(?Herodotus 1.179–186)	1.25.1 (wall of Babylon)	N
(?Herodotus <i>Medika</i>)	1.25.2 (tapestries)	N
(Thucydides 1.137)	1.29	Vardanes
Sappho's poems	1.30	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 9.82–104)	1.40 lotus-eaters	A
(?[Aeschylus] <i>Prometheus</i>)	2.3 Prometheus in Caucasus	N
(?Arrian <i>Peripl.</i> 11)	2.3 Prometheus in Caucasus	N

Table 1 (cont.)

Archilochus fr. 5 West	2.7.2	A
Iuba rex Mauretaniae	2.13.1	N
Euripides <i>Andromache</i> 418–9	2.14.4	Damis
Iuba rex Mauretaniae	2.16 (elephant collaboration)	N
Nearchus	2.17.1	N
Orthagoras	2.17.1	N
(?Ilias Parva; ?Sophocles <i>Ajax</i>)	2.22.5	A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 18.483–608	2.22.5	A
(4.451, 8.65)	2.22.5	A
(Thucydides 1.5.2) ¹⁴	2.29.2	Phraotes
(Euripides <i>Heraclidae</i>)	2.32.1–2, 2.33	Phraotes
(?Archilochus fr. 178.1 West)	2.36.1 μελαμπύγου τυχεῖν	Damis
(Euripides <i>Bacchae</i> 918–9)	2.36.1	N
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 2.308	3.6.2	N
‘other poets’	3.6.2 Nemean snake	N
(?Plato <i>Republic</i>)	3.8.2 ring of Gyges	N
(?Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 10.19–27)	3.14.2 Aeolus’ bag of winds	N
Sophocles <i>Paean to Asclepius</i> (PMG 737a; T73a Radt) ¹⁵	3.17.2	N
Homer <i>Iliad</i> (<i>passim</i>)	3.19.2 Achilles κάλλιστος	A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 2.671–4	3.19.2 Nireus κάλλιστος	A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> Book 1	3.20.3	A
(?Sophocles <i>Philoctetes</i> ; ?Cypria cf. fr. 27 West)	3.22 Palamedes not in Homer	Iarchas
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 4.365ff	3.24.1 Proteus (cf. 1.4)	N
(?Pindar <i>Olympian</i> 1)	3.25.2	Iarchas
(?Ctesias fr. 57.7)	3.45.1 the μαρτιχόρας	A
(?Ctesias fr. 59 or Aristophanes <i>Aves</i> 1553)	3.45.2 σκιάποδες	A
Scylax	3.47 σκιάποδες	N
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> Books 9 and 24)	4.11.2	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 3.337 etc.)	4.11.3	A
(?Cypria, arg. 10, ?Aithiopsis, arg. 2)	4.11.3 Memnon and Cycnus	A

¹⁴ I am grateful to Jaap-Jan Flinterman for drawing this allusion to my attention.

¹⁵ On this poem see Bowie 2006:83–5.

Table 1 (cont.)

(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 24.797)	4.11.3 Hector ἐν καπέτῳ κοίλῃ	A
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 3.174–9	4.15.1	N
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 11)	4.16.1	A
(?Aithiopsis, arg 4)	4.16.4 Muses and Nereids sing a <i>threnos</i> for Achilles	Ach <i>apud</i> A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 24.797	4.16.4 Achilles and Patroclus share one urn	Ach <i>apud</i> A
(?Iliou persis, arg 4)	4.16.4 Polyxena	Ach <i>apud</i> A
(?Stesichorus <i>Palinode</i> , Herodotus 2.117–9, Euripides <i>Helen</i>)	4.16.5 Helen was in Egypt	Ach <i>apud</i> A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> Book 6)	4.20.1 Alcinous	N
(?Herodotus 7.99 etc.)	4.21.2 Artemisia	A
Euripides <i>Bacchae</i> 980	4.21.2 γυναικομίμῳ <μορφώματι> (Eur. MSS have στόλα)	A
(?Herodotus 7.219–228)	4.23 Leonidas and Megistias	A
Favorinus	4.25.1 Favorinus mentions Demetrius the Cynic	N
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 11.582–92	4.25.4 Tantalus	A
(?Xenophon <i>Hellenica</i>)	4.32.1 Arginusae	N & A
Plato <i>Laws</i> 803c	4.36.2 man is god's παίγνιον	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 9)	4.36.3 Cyclops	Philolaus & A
Sophocles <i>Antigone</i> 450	4.38.5	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 13.131)	4.38.5	N
(whose?) <i>Oresteia</i> & (?)Sophocles <i>Antigone</i>	4.39.2 sung by unnamed man/Nero	N
(?Euripides <i>Alcestis</i>)	4.45.1 comparison of girl to Alcestis	N
(?Euripides <i>Oenomaus</i> , <i>Cresphontes</i>)	5.7.2	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 12.260–261?)	5.11	N
(Euripides) ὁ ποιητής: lines found at the end of <i>Alcestis</i> , <i>Andromache</i> , <i>Bacchae</i> , <i>Helen</i> and (with variation) <i>Medea</i> ¹⁶	5.14.3 πολλὰ μορφὰι τῶν δαιμονίων 5.15.3 τοιόνδ' ἰπέβη τὸ...πρῶγμα	A

¹⁶ Much cited in authors of this period: Plutarch, *Mor.* 58A, 497D; Lucian *Symp.* 48, cf. *Trag.* 325–34; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 6.14.1; Cassius Dio 78.8.4.

Table 1 (cont.)

Vita of Aesop?	5.15	A
(Herodotus 8.64–5)	5.20.2	A
(?Iliou persis, arg. 1)	5.26.1 Trojans drunk at sack	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 4.451)	5.26.2	N
(Plato <i>Republic</i> 515a–516a) ¹⁷	5.34.2	A
(Thucydides 2.65.9)	5.35.4 single man's rule	A
Aristotle <i>Politics</i> 1284a17	5.36.2	A
(?Herodotus 2.172)	5.42.1 Amasis	A
(Hesiod <i>Works & days</i> 151)	6.2.2	A
(Euripides <i>Hippolytus</i> , probably <i>stephanephoros</i>)	6.3.1 and 5 Phaedra and Hippolytus	N & A
(Xenophon <i>Memorabilia</i> 2.1.21–34)	6.10.5 Prodicus' Choice of Heracles	Thespesion
Plato <i>Phaedo</i>	6.11.8	A
Stesichorus <i>Palinode</i> PMGF 192 (?from Plato <i>Phaedrus</i> 243a)	6.11.14	A
(?Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 12.39–40)	6.11.15 Sirens	A
anonymous hexameter (also cited by Plutarch, <i>Pyth.or.</i> 402D)	6.11.15	A
(Herodotus 1.25.2, 50–51)	6.11.15 Glaucus' cup; gold gifts	A
(Herodotus 1.47.3)	6.11.16	A
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 9.106–111	6.11.18 Cyclops	A
(Euripides <i>Bacchae</i> 704–711)	6.11.18 milk and wine	A
(Plato <i>Apology</i> 24b)	6.11.18	A
(Plato <i>Republic</i> 617e)	6.16.1 αἰτία ἐλομένου	Nilus
Pindar fr. 282 Snell-Maehler cf. <i>Imagines</i> 1.5	6.26.2 Nile	N
Archytas	6.31.1	A
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 2.11	6.31.2	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 11.134)	6.32.2	A
(?Plato <i>Epistle</i> 7)	7.2.1 & 7.3.1 (cf. 1.35.1)	N
Sophocles <i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i> 410	7.4.2	N
Euripides fr. 420.1–3 Kannicht	7.5	A
(?Herodotus 4.36.1)	7.10.1 Abaris' travelling	N
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 1.58)	7.10.2 καπνοῦ (inverted)	A

¹⁷ I am grateful to Jaap-Jan Flinterman for drawing this allusion to my attention.

Table 1 (cont.)

(Plato <i>Phaedrus</i> 230b)	7.11.1 plane tree, cicadas	N
(Plato <i>Apology</i>)	7.11.2	Demetrius
Pindar <i>Pythian</i> 1.10–13	7.12.4 the lyre charms Ares	Demetrius
(Epicurus)	7.12.5 μή ἐν φανερώ ζῆν	Demetrius
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 10.72–5)	7.14.8 Aeolus	A
Euripides <i>Orestes</i> 395–6	7.14.10 σύνεσις	A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 18.309	7.14.11 ξυνὸς Ἐνυάλιος	A
(?Plutarch <i>Vita Aristidis</i> 7.7 or [Plut.] <i>reg. et imp. apophth.</i> = [Mor]186a)	7.21.1 Aristides inscribes ostrakon	N
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 4.220–30	7.22.1 φάρμακα	A
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 4.228	7.22.2 Polydamna wife of Thon	Damis
Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 5.333–353	7.22.2 Leucothea	Damis
(?Thucydides 2.102.5)	7.25 Alcmaeon settles Echinades	N
Archilochus fr. 13 West	7.26.2 τλημοσύνη	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 8.266–366)	7.26.6 Ares bound by Hephaestus	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 5.385–391)	7.26.6 Ares bound by Otus and Ephialtes	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 9)	7.28.3 Cyclops	A
Aesop fable 142 Perry	7.30.3 the vixen and lion in a cave	Damis
(Plato <i>Republic</i> 329c)	(cf. 1.13.3) 7.31.2 Sophocles on sex	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 5.127)	7.32.2 Diomedes at Troy	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 23.141)	7.36.2 Achilles cuts hair for Patroclus	A
Demosthenes 18 (<i>de corona</i>). 136	7.37 Python	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 1.45–50, 5.157–8)	7.41	A
(Euripides <i>Hippolytus</i> , probably <i>stephanephoros</i>)	7.42.2 Hippolytus was destroyed for his σωφροσύνη	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 22.13)	8.5.3 οὐ γάρ με κτενέεις, ἐπεὶ οὗτοι μόρσιμός εἰμι	A
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 7.51–60	8.7.14 lament for Euphorbus	A

Table 1 (cont.)

Empedocles	8.7.18 (cf. 1.1) hymns about his divinity	A
(Herodotus 1.65)	8.7.21	A
(Homer <i>Iliad</i> 16.433–438)	8.7.48 Zeus and Sarpedon	A
(?Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 11.568–71 or Aeschylus, <i>Psychostasia</i>)	8.7.48 Minos in Hades	A
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 1 and 5)	8.11 Calypso	N
(Homer <i>Odyssey</i> 13.103–112)	8.11–12 Cave of the Nymphs	N
Homer <i>Iliad</i> 14.233	8.13.2	N
Apollonius of Tyana: 6 hexameters	8.31.3	N

Table 2: Philostratus Apollonius: citations by author (unsignalled citations in brackets)

Anonymous 4-line elegiac epigram (also in AP 7.256)	1.24.2
Anonymous hexameter (also in Plutarch <i>Pyth.or.</i> 402D)	6.11.15
Anonymous poets other than Homer	3.6.2 Nemean snake
'Assyrians' (local Antioch story)	1.16.1 Κυπάρριτος
(?Aeschylus] <i>Prometheus</i>)	2.3 Prometheus in Caucasus
(?Aeschylus] <i>Oresteia</i>	4.39.2
(?Aeschylus] <i>Psychostasia</i>)	8.7.48
Aesop fable 142 Perry	7.30.3 vixen and lion in cave
<i>Aesopi Vita</i> ?	5.15 Hermes story
Archilochus fr. 5 West	2.7.2
Archilochus fr. 13 West	7.26.2 τλημοσύνη
(?Archilochus fr. 178.1 West)	2.36.1
Archytas	6.31.1
(?Aristophanes <i>Aves</i> 1553)	3.45.2 σκιάποδες
Aristotle <i>Politics</i> 1284a17	5.36.2
(?Ctesias fr. 57.7)	3.45.1 the μαρτιχώρας
(?Ctesias fr. 59)	3.45.2 σκιάποδες
Demosthenes 18.136	7.37 Python
Empedocles	1.1, 8.7.18
(Epic cycle, ? <i>Cypria</i> cf. fr. 27 West)	3.22 Palamedes is not in Homer
(?Cypria, arg. 10, ? <i>Aithiopsis</i> , arg. 2)	4.11.3 Memnon and Cycnus
(?Iliou persis, arg. 4)	4.16.4 Achilles and Polyxena
(?Aithiopsis, arg. 4)	4.16.4 Muses & Nereids sing a threnos for Achilles
(?Iliou persis, arg. 1)	5.26.1 the Trojans were drunk at the sack of Troy

Table 2 (cont.)

Epicurus	7.12.5 μὴ ἐν φανερωῷ ζῆν
Euripides	
(<i>Alcestis</i>)	4.45.1
(<i>Alcestis</i> 1159–63 etc., cited as by ὁ ποιητής)	5.14.3 πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαίμονων
<i>Andromache</i> 418–9	5.15.3 τοιόνδ’ ἀπέβη... τὸ πρᾶγμα
(<i>Bacchae</i> 704–711)	2.14.4
(<i>Bacchae</i> 918–9)	6.11.18
<i>Bacchae</i> 980	2.36.1
	4.21.2 γυναικομίμω <μορφώματι> (Euripides’ MSS have στόλα)
<i>Heraclidae</i> (title but not poet cited)	2.32–33
(<i>Hippolytus</i> probably <i>stephanephoros</i>)	6.3.1 & 5 Phaedra & Hippolytus
(<i>Hippolytus</i> probably <i>stephanephoros</i>)	7.42.2 Hippolytus destroyed for σωφροσύνη
(<i>Orestes</i> 395–6)	7.14.10 σύνεσις
(<i>Oenomaus, Cresphontes</i>)	5.7.2
fr. 420.1–3 Kannicht	7.5
Favorinus	4.25.1 mentions Demetrius the Cynic
Heraclitus	1.9.2
(Herodotus 1.25.2, 50–51)	6.11.15
(Herodotus 1.47.3)	6.11.16
(Herodotus 1.65)	8.7.21
(?Herodotus 1.114.2)	1.21.1 βασιλέως ὀφθαλμός
(?Herodotus 1.179–186)	1.25.1 the wall of Babylon
(?Herodotus 4.36.1)	7.10.1 Abaris’ travelling
(?Herodotus 2.172)	5.42.1 Amasis
(?Herodotus 6.99–101)	1.23.2 Eretrians
(?Herodotus 6.119 λέγεται)	1.23.2 pitch well
(?Herodotus 7.99 etc.)	4.21.2 Artemisia
(?Herodotus 7.219–228)	4.23 Leonidas and Megistias
(Herodotus 8.64–5)	5.20.2 Salamis
(?Herodotus <i>Medika</i>)	1.25.2 tapestries
Homer <i>Iliad</i>	
2.301–320	1.22.2
2.308	3.6.2
(3.337)	4.11.3
(4.451)	2.22.5 and 5.26.2
(5.127)	7.32.2 Diomedes at Troy
(5.385–391)	7.26.6 Ares bound by Otus and Ephialtes
(8.65)	2.22.5
(13.131)	4.38.5
14.233	8.13.2
(16.433–438)	8.7.48

Table 2 (cont.)

17.51–60	8.7.14 lament for Euphorbus
18.309	7.14.11 ξυνὸς Ἐνυάλιος
18.483–608	2.22.5
(22.13)	8.5.3 οὐ γάρ με κτενέεις, ἐπεὶ οὔτοι μόρσιμός εἰμι
(23.141)	7.36.2 Achilles cuts hair for Patroclus
24.797	4.11.3 Hector ἐν καπέτῳ κοίλῃ
Homer <i>Odyssey</i>	
(1.58)	7.10.2 καπνοῦ (inverted)
2.11	6.31.2
3.174–9	4.15.1
4.220–230	7.22.1 φάρμακα
4.228	7.22.2 Polydamna wife of Thon
4.365ff	1.4 Proteus (cf. 3.24.1)
5.333–353	7.22.2 Leucothea
(8.266–366)	7.26.6 Ares bound by Hephaestus
Book 9	4.36.3 Cyclops
9.106–111	6.11.18 Cyclops
10.19–27	3.14.2 Aeolus
(10.72–5)	7.14.8 Aeolus
(11.134)	6.32.2
(11.568–571)	4.25.4 Tantalus
11.582–92	8.7.48 Minos in Hades
Iuba rex Mauretaniae	2.13.1 (tusks)
	2.16 (elephant collaboration)
Nearchus	2.17.1
Orthagoras	2.17.1
(Plato <i>Apology</i>)	7.11.2
(Plato <i>Apology</i> 24b)	6.11.18
(Plato <i>Phaedo</i> 117b)	1.12.2 (ταυρηδὸν ὑποβλέψας)
Plato <i>Phaedo</i>	6.11.8
(Plato <i>Phaedrus</i> 230b)	7.11.1 plane tree, cicadas
(Stesichorus <i>PMG</i> 192, ?from Plato <i>Phaedrus</i> 243a)	6.11.14
(?Plato <i>Republic</i>)	3.8.2 ring of Gyges
(?Plato <i>Republic</i> 329c)	1.13.3 (again 7.31.2) Sophocles on sex
(?Plato <i>Republic</i> 515a–516a)	5.34.2 sun and cave
(Plato <i>Republic</i> 617e)	6.16.1 αἰτία ἐλομένου
Plato <i>Laws</i> 698d	Eretrians ‘netted’
Plato <i>Laws</i> 803c	4.36.2 man is god’s παίγνιον
Pindar <i>Pythian</i> 1.10–13	7.12.4 the lyre charms Ares
Pindar fr. 282 Snell-Maehler	6.26.2 the Nile

Table 2 (cont.)

(?Plutarch <i>Vita Aristidis</i> 7.7 or [Plut.] <i>regum et imperatorum</i> <i>Apophthegmata</i> = <i>Moralia</i> 186a)	7.21.1 Aristides inscribes an ostrakon for a rustic
Pythagoras	1.13.3
Sappho's poems	1.30
Scylax	3.47 σκιάποδες
Sophocles <i>Paian to Asclepius</i> (PMG 737a)	3.17.2
<i>Antigone</i> 450	4.38.5
<i>Antigone</i>	4.39.2 sung by anon/Nero
<i>Oedipus tyrannus</i> 410	7.4.2
(?Oedipus tyrannus 1269–70)	1.10.2
<i>Oedipus Coloneus</i> 607–609	8.7.49
(?Philoctetes)	3.22 Palamedes not in Homer
(?Stesichorus <i>Palinode</i>) or (Herodotus 2.113–120)	4.16.5 Helen was in Egypt
Stesichorus <i>Palinode</i> PMGF 192 (?from Plato <i>Phaedrus</i> 243a)	6.11.14
(Thucydides 1.5.2)	2.29.2
(Thucydides 1.137)	1.29
(Thucydides 2.65.9)	5.35.4
(?Thucydides 2.102.5)	7.25 Alcmaeon settles Echinades
(?Xenophon <i>Hellenica</i>)	4.32.1 Arginusae
(Xenophon <i>Memorabilia</i> 2.1.21–34)	6.10.5 Prodicus' Choice of Heracles

HOW TO BECOME A POET? HOMER AND APOLLONIUS VISIT THE MOUND OF ACHILLES¹

PETER GROSSARDT

When coming back from the east of the known world and preparing to cross the sea in order to travel to Greece, Apollonius visits the mound of Achilles near Ilium² and finally gets to know the truth about the Trojan War from the hero himself (VA IV 11–16). Not being thrifty with his newly acquired knowledge, he transmits what he has heard some days later to his fellow passengers on his trip to Greece (IV 15). Apollonius thereby becomes a new poet and a rival to Homer, for now there exist two versions of the story of the Trojan War, Homer's version and that of Apollonius. There is little doubt that this story of the sage's visit to Ilium had been triggered by the historical trip to the same place by Caracalla and his entourage (probably including Philostratus) in the winter of 214/215, when the emperor had crossed the Hellespont to visit the east of the empire and settle some military matters.³

One of the most salient features of Caracalla's visit to Achilles' tomb were his sacrifices to the hero. The historians of the time tell us that these consisted of the regular offerings to a chthonic being, that is mainly the sacrifice of meat (Dio Cassius 78[77],16,7: τὸν τε Ἀχιλλέα καὶ ἐναγίσμασι καὶ περιδρομαῖς ἐνοπλίοις...ἐτίμησε, "he honoured Achilles with chthonic sacrifices and with dances by armed men"), and of a second more peculiar sacrifice brought to Achilles when Caracalla's darling Festus had died (Herodianus 4,8,5: παντοδαπὰ ζῶα κατασφάξας ὑφῆψε, "he slaughtered all kinds of animals and burned them"). With these rites Caracalla was trying to imitate Alexander, who had visited

¹ The following paper is some kind of a *parergon* to my commentary of the *Heroicus* by Flavius Philostratus (Grossardt 2006). Therefore some aspects of Philostratus' work are treated with more detail here, and for some others the reader will be referred to the commentary. I am indebted to Dr J. Blundell (Munich) for correcting my English.

² For the various possible locations of the mound see Cook 1973:173 and 186, and Hertel 2003:166f.

³ The following discussion of the *Vita Apollonii* and the *Heroicus* is based on the edition and translation by C.P. Jones (Jones 2005) for the *Vita* and the edition by L. de Lannoy (de Lannoy 1977) for the *Heroicus*. All other translations are mine, unless a specific translator is named.

the tomb some five hundred years earlier, and even Achilles himself, who had honoured his deceased friend Patroclus with similar offerings. Apollonius, however, avoids such offerings and several times stresses that his sacrifices were bloodless and pure.⁴ Another major difference between Apollonius' visit and that of Caracalla is the sage's personal encounter with the hero, who does not refuse to be seen by Apollonius in his full size (VA IV 16.2). In a rather enigmatic sentence Apollonius goes so far as to remark that Achilles would even have reason to be grateful, if Apollonius' eyes played the role of the witness (IV 16.1: καὶ γὰρ ἂν ὄναιο ἄγαν τῶν ἐμῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, εἰ μάρτυσιν αὐτοῖς τοῦ εἶναι χρήσαιο, "you would be much obliged to my eyes if you used them to attest your existence").

The story of Apollonius' trip to Ilium cannot therefore be explained solely by the historical parallel of Caracalla's visit to the same place, and there is another parallel, which up to now seems to have escaped the notice of Philostratus' modern readers. This is none other than Homer himself making contact with Achilles. This story is mainly attested in two versions, which complement each other, that of the *Vita Romana* (*Vita* 6 according to the numbering of Allen)⁵ and that given in the scholia to Plato's *Phaedrus* 243a (vol. VI p. 268 Hermann).⁶

Vita Romana

τυφλωθῆναι δ' αὐτὸν οὕτω πως λέγουσιν· ἐλθόντα γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέως τάφον εὔξασθαι θεάσασθαι τὸν ἥρωα τοιοῦτον ὅποιος προῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν μάχην τοῖς δευτέροις ὅπλοις κεκοσμημένος· ὀφθέντος δ' αὐτῷ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως τυφλωθῆναι τὸν Ὅμηρον ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν ὅπλων αὐγῆς, ἐλεηθέντα δ' ὑπὸ Θέτιδος καὶ Μουσῶν τιμηθῆναι πρὸς αὐτῶν τῇ ποιητικῇ.

They say that his blindness came about in this way: he went to the tomb of Achilles and prayed that he might behold the hero as he was when he went out to join the battle arrayed in his replacement armour. When Achilles appeared to him, Homer was blinded by the dazzle of the armour; but Thetis and the Muses took pity on him and honored him with the gift of poetry (transl. M.L. West).

⁴ IV 11.1: πολλὰ δὲ τῶν ἀναίμων τε καὶ καθαρῶν καθαγίσας, 'he made...many heroic sacrifices of a bloodless and pure kind'; IV 16.1.

⁵ The *Vita Romana* owes its name to the manuscript kept at the Biblioteca Nazionale in Rome (cod. gr. 6), which is its oldest witness; see West 2003:308.

⁶ The only other author who mentions the story seems to be John Tzetzes, who briefly alludes to it in his *Exegesis in Iliadem* (p. 37,19–21 Hermann), and in his own scholia to the *Exegesis* (p. 154, 4–7 Hermann) gives a condensed summary which seems to follow the *Scholia in Platonem* rather than the *Vita Romana*.

Scholia to Plato *Phaedrus* 243a

περὶ τῆς Ὀμήρου τυφλώσεως διάφοροι φέρονται ἱστορίαι· αἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν καὶ τυφλὸν ἐκ γενετῆς λέγουσι καὶ οὕτω τετέχθαι, οἱ δὲ ποιμαίνοντα παρὰ τῷ τάφῳ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως πολλὰς τινὰς καταβάλεσθαι εἰς τὸν ἥρωα χοῶς καὶ στεφάνους, καὶ παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ὀφθῆναι αὐτῷ· ὁ δὲ ἥρως ὥφθη μετὰ τῆς πανοπλίας λάμπων, καὶ Ὀμηρος μὴ ἐνεγκὼν τὴν λαμπηδόνα τῶν ὀπλῶν ἐτυφλώθη.

About Homer's blinding various stories are reported. Some say that he was blind from birth and that he came into the world in this condition. But others say that he was working as a shepherd near Achilles' tomb, that he made many libations to the hero and laid down garlands, and that he finally asked him to show himself. The hero, however, appeared in all his shining armour, and Homer, who could not stand the sight and the brightness of the armour, was blinded.

Taken together, the two texts show that Homer was a shepherd offering (meatless) sacrifice and seeking contact with the local heroes of the Troad (there are many stories, mainly attested by Philostratus in his *Heroicus*, of the local population of Ilium encountering a hero near his grave⁷). Achilles showed himself and thereby blinded his pious but all too curious visitor. But in compensation Homer was rewarded with the gift of ποιητική by Thetis and by the Muses. The short note in the *Vita Romana* does not tell us exactly what is implied by this very general term ποιητική. It certainly means the correct handling of the lyre and of the hexameter. But as the Muses are the daughters of Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, ποιητική here almost certainly also implies the knowledge Homer needs if he is going to sing about ancient times, that is the factual knowledge about the Trojan War and about Odysseus' travels.⁸ Otherwise, as a simple shepherd without apparent ties to other poets, Homer could not have become a singer who from that moment on was able to teach his contemporaries about the glorious past.⁹ What is more, the motif of Homer losing his eyesight but receiving from the Muses the art of poetry in exchange seems to be based on the description of the blind bard Demodocus in the *Odyssey* (8,63f: τὸν περὶ Μοῦσ'

⁷ Most importantly the story of the shepherds angering Ajax near his grave, which is attested by Philostratus (*Her.* 18,3–5) and by the *Anthologia Palatina* (9,177).

⁸ These two components of the art of poetry were seen as a unity long into classical times, as is shown, for example, by Plato's *Gorgias* (502c), where we are told that the art of poetry (ἡ ποιητική) consisted of μέλος, ῥυθμός, and μέτρον, but also of λόγοι.

⁹ Similarly Hesiod, also a shepherd near Mount Helicon, was ordered by the Muses to sing about the present and the future and above all about the glorious past when the gods came into being (*Th.* 22–34, see the appendix at the end of the paper).

ἐφίλησε, δίδου δ' ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε // ὀφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδου δ' ἡδεῖαν ἀοιδήν, “the Muse loved him very much; she gave him good and evil. She robbed him of his eyes, but gave him sweet song”).¹⁰ The scene following this introductory remark about the Phaeacian singer makes it very clear that Demodocus would be unable to sing the story of the Trojan War with such precision, if he hadn't received help from a divine source. The story of Homer's consecration as a poet near Ilium therefore also depends on the Homeric epics themselves and perpetuates their view about poetical inspiration.¹¹

Apollonius' story in IV 11–16 shares a number of peculiar features with this tradition about Homer, most importantly the stress laid on meatless sacrifice, the visual encounter with the hero¹² and the knowledge acquired at his grave. There are only two major differences: first, Homer gets his knowledge from Thetis and from the Muses, whereas Apollonius gets it from Achilles himself,¹³ and second, Homer's eyes are destroyed, but those of Apollonius remain intact in order to serve as witnesses.

The *Vita Romana* enjoys quite good credit among the students of Homer's traditional biography and seems to be a relatively faithful witness to the book or books about Homer and his legend which were written in the early empire.¹⁴ The tradition of Homer's change from shepherd to poet may indeed be much older,¹⁵ as the core of these

¹⁰ Similarly Teiresias is said to have been blinded after having seen Athena naked and to have been indemnified by the gift of prophesy (Callimachus *Lav. Pall.* 57–130, Apollodorus *Bibl.* III 6,7). A different case, however, is that of Stesichorus, who was already a poet before losing his eyesight and who regained it after having corrected his wrongful version of the story of Helen's abduction (see the recent treatment by Kelly 2007:7f).

¹¹ For the general tendency of the Homeric Lives to integrate motifs taken from the Homeric epics themselves see Latacz 1989²:33–40.

¹² There are some other hints that Achilles was occasionally seen by the shepherds in the Troad. But these appearances are again attested by Philostratus only (*Her.* 22,1–2) and they are not the result of some ritual invocation. With respect to Xerxes (Herodotus VII 43,2), Alexander the Great (Diodorus Siculus 17,17–18; Plutarchus *Alex.* 15,7–9; Arrianus *An.* I 11–12), and Caracalla, who all came to the mound, we never hear of a visual encounter between visitor and hero.

¹³ For the possible significance of this difference see the appendix below.

¹⁴ Cp. the analysis of Allen 1924:28–34.

¹⁵ That the *Vita Romana* follows an earlier model and that its author has not made up himself the story of Homer's encounter with Achilles, is in any case proven by the additional elements of the *Scholia in Platonem*, which can hardly be an invention by the scholiast, but will also go back to an earlier model, that is the common source of the *Vita* and the *Scholia*.

legends goes back to the sixth century BCE.¹⁶ There is therefore little doubt that Philostratus was familiar with this tradition and made use of it for his own purposes, that is, transferred the story of the visual encounter between visitor and hero from Homer to Apollonius.

If we stay for one more moment with this story and compare it with other stories about how Homer got his knowledge of the Trojan War, the ideal would, of course, have been that Homer himself was an eye-witness of the events.¹⁷ This position did indeed exist in antiquity¹⁸ and was apparently favoured among others by Crates of Mallos and his Pergamene school of Homeric philology.¹⁹ To most ancient scholars, however, it was clear that Homer lived much later. Therefore several theories were developed about Homer's sources. According to one theory that Ptolemaeus Chennus claims to have found in his sources, Homer got his knowledge from a poem by Helen of Athens.²⁰ According to another one, equally attested or rather invented by Ptolemaeus Chennus, Homer copied a book by Phantasia of Memphis in Egypt.²¹ Following the tradition of the inhabitants of the town of Kenchreae in the Troad Homer spent some time in this town and learned the truth about the Trojan War from the local population.²² According to the *Vita Herodoti* Homer travelled around on Mentes' ship and interviewed the local population of each place he visited, particularly on Ithaca where he got his knowledge about Odysseus.²³ The common denominator of these stories is that Homer had to travel around, but was rewarded with knowledge about the Trojan War. Our claim made above that ποιητική in the *Vita Romana* means not just poetic technique but also factual knowledge is thereby confirmed. The *Vita Romana* is unique, however, in that Homer gets his information directly from a hero or at least at his

¹⁶ See von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1916:437–439 and Allen 1924:36–41, still confirmed by Vogt 1991:368f and West 2003:9 (for possible functions of the various legends about Homer which circulated in late archaic and classical Greece see the discussions of Graziosi 2004 and Nagy 2004).

¹⁷ See the compliments Odysseus pays to Demodocus for his lively representation of the sack of Troy (Homer *Od.* 8.491).

¹⁸ Cp. "Plutarchus" *De Homero* 1,5,1 (γενέσθαι δὲ αὐτὸν τοῖς χρόνοις οἱ μὲν φασὶ κατὰ τὸν Τρωικὸν πόλεμον οὐ καὶ αὐτόπτην γενέσθαι, 'some say he lived at the time of the Trojan War and saw it himself'; transl. J.J. Keaney, R. Lamberton).

¹⁹ Cp. Crates of Mallos frg. 73 Broggiato.

²⁰ Photius *Bibl.* 190, 149b22–25.

²¹ Photius *Bibl.* 190, 151a37–b5.

²² Stephanus Byzantius s. v. Κενχρεαί (for the background of this tradition see von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1916:426f).

²³ *Vita Herodoti* 6–7.

grave. The only parallel seems to be the story ‘reported’ by Philostratus in his *Heroicus* (43,12–16), according to which Homer consulted the oracle of Odysseus on Ithaca. As there was no such oracle on Ithaca it is most probable that Philostratus made up this story himself mixing the traditions attested in the *Vita Herodoti* (Homer’s visit to Ithaca) and the *Vita Romana* (Homer’s visit to a hero). We may therefore conclude again that Philostratus was well acquainted with the motif of Homer’s visit to the mound of Achilles and made it the starting-point of his own story in the *Vita Apollonii*.

So far we have argued that the episode related in VA IV 11–16 owes its existence to the historical trip to Ilium made by Caracalla and to a motif found in the legendary biographies of Homer. But there is still one feature in the episode that cannot be explained by either of these models or by some local tradition attested elsewhere, that is the five questions Apollonius asks of Achilles. The most important aspect of this motif is the way the questions are introduced. For it is not Apollonius who demands permission to ask the questions, but Achilles himself offers exactly this number of questions:

“ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ τί σου, Ἀχιλλεῦ, δέομαι.” “ζυνίημι”, ἔφη “δῆλος γὰρ εἰ περὶ τῶν Τρωικῶν <ἐρωτήσεων>· ἐρώτα δὲ λόγους πέντε, οὓς αὐτός τε βούλει καὶ Μοῖραι ξυγχοροῦσιν”.

“But I have a request to make of you, Achilles”. “I understand,” he replied; “you are obviously going to ask about the Trojan War. So you can ask five questions, such as you wish and the Fates permit” (IV 16.4).

Achilles seems to know already what awaits him, as a hero with oracular capacities should, of course. But if we are less inclined to believe in oracles, we must look instead for some literary tradition having such a feature; and there is indeed one famous example of someone asking another person five questions about Homer. That is in Lucian’s *Verae Historiae*, where after long travels the narrator finally reaches the Island of the Blest, where he meets Homer among others and takes advantage of the encounter to ask everything he always wanted to know about the poet and his work:

οὐπὼ δὲ δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἡμέραι διεληλύθεσαν, καὶ προσελθὼν ἐγὼ Ὅμηρῳ τῷ ποιητῇ, σχολῆς οὔσης ἀμφοῖν, τά τε ἄλλα ἐπυνθανόμην καὶ ὅθεν εἶη, λέγων τοῦτο μάλιστα παρ’ ἡμῖν εἰσέτι νῦν ζητεῖσθαι.

Hardly two or three days had passed before I went up to Homer the poet when we were both at leisure, and questioned him about everything.

“Above all,” said I, “where do you come from? This point in particular is being investigated even yet at home” (VH 2,20; transl. A.M. Harmon).

These are the questions about his place of birth, about the obelized verses, about the reason for beginning the *Iliad* with the word *μῆνις* and the topic of the wrath, about the relative chronology of *Odyssey* and *Iliad* and about Homer’s blindness. Or to be exact, the last question need not be asked anymore, because it is obvious that Homer never lost his eyesight:

ὅτι μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲ τυφλὸς ἦν, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγουσιν, αὐτίκα ἠπιστάμην· ἑώρα γάρ, ὥστε οὐδὲ πυνθάνεσθαι ἐδεόμην.

That he was not blind, as they say, I understood at once—for he was able to see, and so I had no need to ask (transl. A.M. Harmon, slightly adapted).

This question is rather some kind of an ‘Abbruchsformel’, which shows the futility of all this Homeric scholarship.²⁴

The obvious argument against tracing VA IV 11–16 back to VH 2,20 is, of course, the small impact Lucian made on post-Antonine literature. But his work survived and cannot have been completely overlooked, and there are some other hints that Philostratus might have known the *Verae Historiae*. One of these hints is Ajax’s suicide, which is problematized in Lucian VH 2,7 and Philostratus *Her.* 35,15 in an almost Christian way not usually found; another possible hint is the motif of the heroes themselves singing the Homeric epics on the Island of the Blest which is attested in Lucian VH 2,15 (ἄδεται δὲ αὐτοῖς τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη μάλιστα, “for the most part they [sc. the heroes] sing the epics of Homer”, transl. A.M. Harmon) and reappears in Philostratus *Her.* 54,12 (ἄδειν καὶ Ὀμήρου τὰ ἔπη τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ Τροίᾳ καὶ τὸν Ὀμηρον αὐτόν, “they [sc. Achilles and Helen] are said to sing Homer’s epic lines on Troy and also a hymn on Homer himself”), but is not found in other reports about Achilles’ stay with Helen on the island of Leuke.

However, apart from the different addressees there is one major difference between these two sets of five questions. Lucian’s five questions are about the life of Homer and about his two epics. They could therefore be termed *philological* questions. Apollonius’ questions, as we are

²⁴ For the connection of Lucian’s five questions with the academic tradition see von Möllendorff 2000:367–373 and Nesselrath 2002.

about to see, concern what really happened at Troy. These are therefore *historical* questions.²⁵ The significance of these two different approaches can, however, only be discussed when we have examined Apollonius' five questions in some detail; and as these questions are all paralleled in the *Heroicus*, this work needs to be examined at the same time.

First question: the burial of Achilles

ἡρόμην οὖν πρῶτον, εἰ κατὰ τὸν τῶν ποιητῶν λόγον ἔτυχε τάφου. “κείμεαι μὲν,” εἶπεν “ὥς ἔμοιγε ἡδιστον καὶ Πατρόκλῳ ἐγένετο, ξυνέβημεν γὰρ δὴ κομιδῇ νέοι, ξυνέχει δὲ ἄμφω χρυσοῦς ἀμφορεὺς κειμένους, ὥς ἓνα. Μουσῶν δὲ θρήνοι καὶ Νηρηίδων, οὓς ἐπ' ἔμοι γενέσθαι φασί, Μοῦσαι μὲν οὐδ' ἀφίκοντό ποτε ἐνταῦθα, Νηρηίδες δὲ ἔτι φοιτῶσι.

So first I asked if he received burial in the way the poets describe. “I am buried,” he replied, “in the way most pleasing to myself and to Patroclus, for we met when we were very young men, and a golden vessel holds us both as a single person. But as for the dirges which they say the Muses and the Nereids made over me, why, the Muses never once came here, though the Nereids still visit.”

The first part of Achilles' answer is also confirmed by the vintner of the Thracian Chersonesus tending the sanctuary of Protesilaus and talking to his visitor, a Phoenician merchant (*Her.* 51,12: τὸν μὲν δὲ κολωνὸν τοῦτον, ξένε, ... ἡγειραν οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ ξυνελθόντες, ὅτε τῷ Πατρόκλῳ ξυνεμίχθη ἐς τὸν τάφον, “the mound over there, stranger... was built by the Greeks, when they came together in order to add Achilles' remains to those of Patroclus”). We must therefore ask ourselves why Apollonius wanted to scrutinize a motif that was hardly ever doubted by anyone.²⁶ The answer could be that the common burial of Achilles and Patroclus was challenged not so much from the historical as from the philological point of view. That is, of the two lines in the Homeric account (*Il.* 23,91–92: ὣς δὲ καὶ ὅστέα νῶιν ὁμή σορὸς ἀμφικαλύπτοι, // χρύσεος ἀμφορεῦς, τὸν τοι πόρε πότνια μήτηρ, “in the same way our bones shall be held by one and the same urn, by a golden jar, which your venerable

²⁵ The difference has been noticed but not further discussed by Schirren 2005:303 n262.

²⁶ The only writer to my knowledge who doubted it was Dio Chrysostomus (*or.* 11,103). But the motif of the common burial is only a minor point there, as Dio mainly wants to say that Patroclus took no part at all in the fight against Hector. In the *Ephemeris* by Dictys (4,13) the Homeric version is largely confirmed.

mother gave to you”) the second was athetized by Aristarchus on the grounds that it was missing from many manuscripts of the time²⁷ and that there was an unnecessary duplication of the terms for the vessel the bones were kept in.²⁸ Aristarchus therefore concluded that line 92 was modelled on the parallel account of Homer *Od.* 24,73–74 (δῶκε δὲ μήτηρ // χρύσειον ἀμφιφορῆα, “his mother gave him a golden jar”) and was added by an interpolator only some time later. Now if we look again at Achilles’ answer in *VA* IV 16 (ζυνέχει δὲ ἄμφω χρυσοῦς ἀμφορεύς κειμένους, ὥς ἔνα), Philostratus obviously agreed with the Alexandrian scholars that ἀμφιφορεύς should be a noun and not, as some modern editors and translators are inclined to believe, an adjective. But he apparently saw no problem in the added term ἀμφιφορεύς and confirmed the authenticity of line 92 by using the contemporary synonym ἀμφορεύς in the same grammatical position, that is as the subject of the sentence in the nominative singular.

The second part of the answer poses somewhat different problems. It is again confirmed by the vintner:

ἃ δὲ τῷ Ὀμήρῳ ἐν δευτέρᾳ Ψυχοστασία εἴρηται, εἰ δὴ Ὀμήρου ἐκεῖνα, ὡς ἀποθανόντα Ἀχιλλεῖα Μοῦσαι μὲν ᾠδαῖς ἐθρήνησαν, Νηρηίδες δὲ πληγαῖς τῶν στέρνων, οὐ παρὰ πολὺ φησι κεκομπάσθαι, Μούσας μὲν γὰρ οὔτε ἀφικέσθαι οὔτε ἄσαι, οὐδὲ Νηρηίδων τινὰ ὀφθῆναι τῷ στρατῷ καίτοι γινωσκομένας, ὅτι ἤκουσι, θανμαστὰ δὲ ζυμβῆναι ἕτερα καὶ οὐ πόρρω τῶν Ὀμήρῳ εἰρημένων.

What has been said by Homer in the Second Necyia,²⁹ if this is indeed Homer’s, that the Muses lamented the dead Achilles with song, but the Nereids by beating their breasts, this, he [sc. Protesilaus] says, is no overstatement at all. For the Muses neither came here nor sang, and none of the Nereids was seen by the army, though they are recognized when they come. But other wonders happened which were not far from what Homer said (*Her.* 51,7).

²⁷ T scholia to Homer *Il.* 23,92, vol. V p. 383,52–54 Erbse (ἐν πάσαις {δὲ} οὐκ ἦν ὁ στίχος· καὶ Ἀρίσταρχος ἐκ τῆς <δευτέρας> Νεκυίας αὐτὸν ἐσπάσθαι φησίν, ‘the line was not found in all manuscripts and Aristarchus says it was taken from the Second Necyia’).

²⁸ A scholia to Homer *Il.* 23,92, vol. V p. 383,47–49 Erbse (ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι εἰ σορὸν δέδωκεν, ἦν ἐν ἄλλοις λάρνακα καλεῖ...πρὸς τί καὶ ἀμφιφορῆα; μετενήνεκται οὖν ἐκ τῆς δευτέρας Νεκυίας, ‘it is athetized, for if she [sc. Thetis] gave a sorός, which he [sc. Homer] calls at other places λάρναξ,...for what reason would he also call it an ἀμφιφορεύς? It is therefore taken over from the Second Necyia’).

²⁹ In Philostratus’ oeuvre the term ψυχοστασία has the same meaning as νεκυία, as is shown by the parallel in *VA* VIII 7.48.

Philostratus seems here to allude to a contemporary cultic tradition about repeated visits of the Nereids at the mound of Achilles (VA IV 16: Νηρηίδες δὲ ἔτι φοιτῶσι, *Her.* 51,7: καίτοι γινωσκομένας, ὅτι ἤκουσι).³⁰ As the continuation in *Her.* 51,8–11 shows, the Nereids' presence at the burial of Achilles is not denied by Philostratus, but rather rationalized. But the Muses of whom Homer speaks in *Od.* 24,60–61³¹ are kept out of the story altogether. The reason for that may again be the philological activity of the Alexandrians, for Aristarchus athetized the whole of the Second Necyia, not least on the ground that the Muses are not numbered elsewhere in the Homeric epics.³² Taken together, the message of the two parts of Achilles' answer might be approximately: "All right, I had it my way with the disputed line of *Il.* 23,92. So let's be generous now, and give way to the Alexandrian philologists over the question of the Muses. But please tell me, gentlemen, if the Second Necyia was interpolated, where did the other interpolator actually get line 92 from?"³³ What is clear in any case is that questions that are seemingly historical cannot be answered without looking at the Homeric text and its traditional interpretation; what started as a historical question now turns out to be a philological one instead.

Second question: the sacrifice of Polyxena

μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ἡρόμην, εἰ ἡ Πολυξένη ἐπισφαγείη αὐτῷ, ὃ δὲ ἀληθὲς μὲν ἔφη τοῦτο εἶναι, σφαγῆναι δὲ αὐτὴν οὐχ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν, ἀλλ' ἐκούσαν

³⁰ The alleged hymn to Thetis in *Her.* 53,10 is probably one more allusion to this popular belief and a projection of contemporary practice onto early Greek history.

³¹ The Muses' lament at Achilles's burial was apparently a traditional motif of epic, as is shown by their appearance in the *Aithiopis* (Proclus *Chr.* p. 69,19–21 Bernabé) and in Pindar (*I.* 8,56a–60).

³² M and V scholia to Homer *Od.* 24,1, vol. II pp. 724,12–725,17 Dind. (Ἀρίσταρχος ἀθετεῖ τὴν Νεκυίαν κεφαλαίοις τοῖς συνεκτικωτάτοις τοῖσδε... ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀριθμεῖν τὰς Μούσας οὐχ Ὀμηρικόν..., 'Aristarchus athetized the Necyia mainly for the following reasons... Numbering the Muses, too, is not Homeric...').

³³ Apollonius and Achilles (and Philostratus) seem therefore to reach the same conclusion as Lucian and Homer in *VH* 2,20, where the obelized lines are the topic of the second question but give rise to the remark that all this philological activity of excising lines was nonsense (ἔτι δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀθετουμένων στίχων ἐπηρώτων, εἰ ὑπ' ἐκείνου εἰσὶ γεγραμμένοι. καὶ ὅς ἔφασκε πάντας αὐτοῦ εἶναι. κατεγίνωσκον οὖν τῶν ἀμφὶ τὸν Ζηνόδοτον καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον γραμματικῶν πολλὴν τὴν ψυχρολογίαν, 'I went on to require whether the bracketed lines had been written by him, and he asserted that they were all his own: consequently I held the grammarians Zenodotus and Aristarchus guilty of pedantry in the highest degree', transl. A.M. Harmon).

ἐπὶ τὸ σῆμα ἐλθοῦσαν καὶ τὸν ἑαυτῆς τε κάκεινον ἔρωτα μεγάλων ἄξιῶσαι
προσπεσοῦσαν ξίφει ὀρθῶ.

After that I asked if Polyxena had been slaughtered in his honor. He said that this was true, though she had not been sacrificed by the Achaeans, but had come to the tomb by her own choice, and had paid a great tribute to their mutual love by falling on an upturned sword.

This story is again confirmed by the *Heroicus* (51,3: Πολυξένης ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς ἦρα... ἦρα δὲ καὶ ἡ Πολυξένη τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως, “Polyxena was loved by Achilles... but Polyxena, too, loved Achilles”; 51,6: τριταίου δὲ ἤδη κειμένου τοῦ νεκροῦ δραμεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ σῆμα ἐν νυκτὶ ξίφει τε αὐτὴν ἐπικλῖναι, “on the third day after the corpse was buried, Polyxena ran to the mound at night and threw herself onto a sword”). But this time it is not really a case of Homeric criticism, because Homer had not mentioned Priam’s daughter at all. The starting-point is rather the cyclic epic of the *Iliupersis*, where we hear for the first time that Polyxena was slaughtered over the grave of Achilles.³⁴ But as this is told in a passage about the dividing of the booty after the sack of Troy, it seems that Achilles, too, mainly wants to get his share and is less interested in the specific person or in a particular rite.³⁵ The cruelty of the act (usually executed by Achilles’ son Neoptolemus) is stressed only by later writers, and the explanation given for the choice of Polyxena is no longer Achilles’ materialism but his love for the young princess.³⁶ Polyxena requiting the love of Achilles and committing suicide, however, is not attested before Philostratus and is therefore probably his own invention.³⁷ This version, of course, relieves Achilles from the responsibility of having killed an innocent young girl and therefore seems appropriate for a report coming from the hero’s own mouth. But what stays behind

³⁴ Proclus *Chr.* p. 89,20–23 Bernabé. The slaughtering of Polyxena seems also to have been mentioned in the cyclic epic of the *Cypria* (frg. 34 Bernabé), but it is unclear whether this had anything to do with Achilles at all.

³⁵ This impression is confirmed by Apollodorus *Epit.* 5,23 and Dictys 5,13.

³⁶ Probably invented by the Sicilian monarch Dionysius I in his *Hektoros lytra* (TrGF 1,76 F 2a); see Grossardt 2005.

³⁷ This conclusion has been contradicted by Schwarz 1992, who discovers Polyxena’s suicide already on several artefacts of the first century BCE. But all these artefacts have been variously interpreted. The motif of Polyxena loving Achilles may have originated from a local story about a Trojan girl who fell in love with the ghost of Antilochus, threw herself down at his grave (which is identical with that of Achilles), and—as we are probably supposed to conclude—took her life there (attested in Philostratus *Her.* 22,3).

our version is perhaps also a literary engagement with Euripides.³⁸ For Euripides was one of the most prominent writers to stress the cruelty of the act (*Tro.* 628–631: αἰαῖ, τέκνον, σὼν ἀνοσίων προσφαγμάτων..., “alas, my child, for your unhallowed slaughter...”, transl. D. Kovacs), but also underlined how brave the princess was when she offered her chest to Neoptolemus’ knife (*Hec.* 548: ἐκοῦσα θνήσκω, “I die of my own accord”, transl. D. Kovacs, as below), knelt down by herself (*Hec.* 561–562: καὶ καθεῖσα πρὸς γαῖαν γόνυ ἔλεξε πάντων τλημονέστατον λόγον, “then sinking to her knees she spoke words of surpassing bravery”), and even made sure that she finished her life in a decent position (*Hec.* 568–570: ἡ δὲ καὶ θνήσκουσ’ ὅμως πολλὴν πρόνοιαν εἶχεν εὐσχήμων πεσεῖν, κρύπτουσ’ ἃ κρύπτειν ὅμματα ἀρσένων χρεῶν, “she, though her life was ebbing out, still took great care to fall in seemly fashion to the ground, concealing from male eyes what should be concealed”). Philostratus thus seems to continue Polyxena’s characterisation by Euripides as an extremely brave and lovable person and even takes up certain terms used by Euripides (cp. *IV* 16.4: ἐκοῦσαν with *Hec.* 548 ἐκοῦσα; *IV* 16.4: προσπεσοῦσαν with *Hec.* 561: πρὸς γαῖαν and *Hec.* 569: πεσεῖν), but in the end nevertheless produces a complete reversal of the Euripidean version.

Third question: the whereabouts of Helen

τρίτον ἡρόμην· ἡ Ἑλένη, ὃ Ἀχιλλεῦ, ἐς Τροίαν ἦλθεν ἢ Ὀμήρῳ ἔδοξεν ὑποθέσθαι ταῦτα; “πολὺν” ἔφη “χρόνον ἐξηπατώμεθα πρεσβευόμενοι τε παρὰ τοὺς Τρῶας καὶ ποιούμενοι τὰς ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς μάχας, ὥς ἐν τῷ Ἰλίῳ οὔσης, ἡ δ’ Αἴγυπτόν τε ᾤκει καὶ τὸν Πρωτέως οἶκον ἀρπασθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ Πάριδος. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐπιστεύθη τοῦτο, ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς τῆς Τροίας λοιπὸν ἐμαχόμεθα, ὥς μὴ αἰσχρῶς ἀπέλθοιμεν.”

Thirdly I asked, “Did Helen come to Troy, Achilles, or did Homer choose to invent all that?” “For a long time,” he replied, “we were fooled, sending embassies to the Trojans and doing battle on her account, as if she was in Ilium. In fact she was living in Egypt and the house of Proteus after Paris had carried her off. Once we were convinced of this, thereafter we fought to win Troy itself, so as not to leave in disgrace.”

That Helen was not really in Troy during the Trojan War but spent the time at home in Laconia or in Egypt at the court of king Proteus

³⁸ Sophocles, too, treated the topic in his *Polyxena* (TrGF 4 F 523–528). But this tragedy is lost to us, and was perhaps already inaccessible to Philostratus.

is, of course, an old story that starts as early as Stesichorus. But the peculiarity of Philostratus' version, again confirmed by the *Heroicus*,³⁹ is the learning process the Greeks went through. At first they believed that Helen really was in Troy and fought to regain her. But after a while they discovered the truth (how actually?) and decided to fight for Troy's riches alone. There is, to my knowledge, no other ancient author who mentions a similar learning process or change of mind on the Greek side. There are, however, prominent texts which exhibit either the first phase or the second one. For the first phase, as understood by Philostratus, an important witness is Herodotus, who says that Helen was in Egypt, but that the Greeks nevertheless fought over her, not believing that she was absent from Troy:

τοὺς δὲ Τευκροὺς τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον λέγειν τότε καὶ μετέπειτα... μὴ μὲν ἔχειν Ἑλένην μηδὲ τὰ ἐπικαλούμενα χρήματα, ἀλλ' εἶναι αὐτὰ πάντα ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ... οἱ δὲ Ἕλληνες καταγελάσθαι δοκέοντες ὑπ' αὐτῶν οὕτω δὴ ἐπολιόρκεον, ἐς ὃ ἐξεῖλον.

The Teucrians said then what they consistently said later too... that they did not have Helen or the property in question, that both were in Egypt... The Greeks thought the Teucrians were laughing at them and so they besieged the city and eventually took it. (Herodotus II 118,3–4, transl. R. Waterfield).

For the second phase in Philostratus' account a much later but no less prominent model was Dio Chrysostomus, who sticks to the Homeric version that Helen stayed with King Priam and his family, but says nevertheless that many Greeks were fighting only for Troy's wealth:

ταῦτα δὴ ἀκούοντες [sc. that Paris had married Helen and brought her to Troy], οἱ μὲν τινες ὠργίζοντο καὶ ἀτιμίαν τῷ ὄντι ἐνόμιζον τῆς Ἑλλάδος τὸ γεγονός, οἱ δὲ τινες ἡλπίζον ὠφεληθήσεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς στρατείας· δόξα γὰρ ἦν τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ πραγμάτων ὡς μεγάλων καὶ πλούτου ὑπερβάλλοντος.

Now some of the suitors were furious on hearing these words, feeling that the occurrence was indeed a disgrace to Greece, while others expected to profit from the campaign; for the notion prevailed that Asia was a land of big things and of wealth untold (*Or.* 11,64, transl. J.W. Cohoon).

³⁹ *Her.* 25,12: κατ' Αἰγυπτόν τε γὰρ τὴν Ἑλένην εἶναι καὶ τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς πάλαι τοῦτο γινώσκοντας ἐκείνη μὲν ἐρρῶσθαι φράζειν, μάχεσθαι δὲ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐν Τροίᾳ πλούτου, 'Helen was in Egypt and the Greeks had long since recognized that. So they said goodbye to her and fought for the riches kept by Troy'.

Philostratus' two phases are therefore some kind of a reflection of the Greek literary history, which so to speak went through a learning process itself, too. As such a combination of sources is entirely in keeping with Philostratus' usual way of dealing with the legend of Troy,⁴⁰ this reflection of a literary development was most probably the result of a conscious decision.

Fourth question: the bravery of the Greeks and the Trojans

ἡψάμην καὶ τετάρτης ἐρωτήσεως καὶ θαυμάζειν ἔφην, εἰ τοσοῦδε ὁμοῦ καὶ τοιούσδε ἄνδρας ἢ Ἑλλὰς ἤνεγκεν, ὁπόσους Ὅμηρος ἐπὶ τὴν Τροίαν ζυντάττει. ὁ δὲ Ἀχιλλεύς “οὐδὲ οἱ βάρβαροι” ἔφη “πολὺν ἡμῶν ἐλείποντο, οὕτως ἢ γῆ πᾶσα ἀρετῆς ἤνθησε”.

I ventured my fourth question, and said I was surprised that Greece had produced as many and as great heroes as Homer arrays against Troy. Achilles replied, “Nor were the barbarians much our inferiors, so much did the whole world teem with virtue”.

Like the points mentioned above, this statement of Achilles is repeated in the *Heroicus* (36,3: φησὶ γὰρ κάκείνους πολὺν πεποιῆσθαι λόγον ἀρετῆς, “he [sc. Protesilaus] says that they too [sc. the Trojans] laid much emphasis on virtue”),⁴¹ and the *Heroicus* even gives detailed pictures of the several Trojan heroes and their respective qualities. Homer is not really criticized here, and there was no need to do so, because according to modern research Homer sees the events from a certain Greek perspective while he is very far from any kind of chauvinism.⁴² The chauvinists are rather the Greek philologists or scholiasts⁴³ with their famous but erroneous claim ἀεὶ γὰρ φιλέλλην ὁ ποιητής.⁴⁴ If Achilles stresses the Trojans' bravery, he is therefore not simply being generous but rather correcting a misguided interpretation of the *Iliad*.

⁴⁰ See my explanation of Philostratus' literary strategy in the *Heroicus* in Grossardt 2004.

⁴¹ The translation by Maclean/Aitken ('those men gained for themselves a great account of their excellence') is wrong here as in so many other places; see e.g. Herodotus I 4.3, Polybius XXI 14.9 and Philostratus VA IV 32 with parallels for the expression λόγον ποιέομαι τιος, 'to lay emphasis on'.

⁴² See the conclusions in Stoevesandt 2004:337–349.

⁴³ See again the summary by Stoevesandt 2004:9–13 with some very significant statements taken from the scholia, for example the explanation of the various similes of the jackdaw (b scholia to Homer *Il.* 17,155, vol. IV p. 432,13–15 Erbse).

⁴⁴ b and T scholia to Homer *Il.* 10,14–16, vol. III p. 6,14–15 Erbse ('for Homer is always on the Greeks' side').

Fifth question: Palamedes' participation in the Trojan War

πέμπτον δ' ἡρόμην· “τί παθὼν Ὅμηρος τὸν Παλαμῆδην οὐκ οἶδεν, ἢ οἶδε μὲν, ἐξαίρει δὲ τοῦ περὶ ὑμῶν λόγου;” “εἰ Παλαμῆδης” εἶπεν “ἐς Τροίαν οὐκ ἦλθεν, οὐδὲ Τροία ἐγένετο· ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀνὴρ σοφώτατός τε καὶ μαχιμώτατος ἀπέθανεν, ὥς Ὀδυσσεὶ ἔδοξεν, οὐκ ἐσάγεται αὐτὸν ἐς τὰ ποιήματα Ὅμηρος, ὥς μὴ τὰ ὀνείδη τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως ᾗδοι.”

My fifth question was: “How is it that Homer does not know about Palamedes, or if he does excises him from his account of you all?” “If Palamedes did not come to Troy,” he replied, “Troy did not exist either. But since that wisest and most warlike of heroes was killed by a ruse of Odysseus, Homer does not bring him into his poem to avoid celebrating Odysseus’ crimes.”

This question is somewhat different from the others in that Apollonius asks not so much about the historical truth—he seems to be certain already that Palamedes did indeed take part in the War—but about the reason why Homer left Palamedes out. Achilles explains this omission by a favour Homer wanted to do Odysseus, and in the *Heroicus* we even hear of a deal between Odysseus and Homer: Homer asked the ghost of Odysseus about the true story of the Trojan War, and Odysseus promised to tell him on condition that Homer would not mention Palamedes in his epics (*Her.* 43,15: μὴ δὴ ἄγε τὸν Παλαμῆδην ἐς Ἴλιον, μηδὲ στρατιώτῃ χρῶ, μηδέ, ὅτι σοφὸς ἦν, εἴπῃς, “[Odysseus speaking to Homer] Don’t lead him to Ilium, don’t use him as a soldier, don’t say that he was wise!”; *Her.* 43,16: αὕτη, ξένε, ἢ Ὀδυσσέως τε καὶ Ὀμήρου ξυνουσία, καὶ οὕτως Ὅμηρος τὰ ἀληθῆ μὲν ἔμαθε, μετεκόσμησε δὲ πολλὰ ἐς τὸ συμφέρον τοῦ λόγου, ὃν ὑπέθετο, “this, stranger, was Odysseus’ and Homer’s encounter, and in this way Homer got to know the truth, but changed a lot for the sake of the story he had taken up”). The explanation for this quite puzzling story can be guessed from Strabo, who says that Palamedes was not mentioned by Homer because his myth was a later invention not yet known to the poet of the *Iliad*:

ἀπὸ τούτου δὲ πεπλάσθαι φασὶ τὸν Ναύπλιον καὶ τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ παρὰ τοῖς νεωτέροις· οὐ γὰρ Ὅμηρον ἀμνημονῆσαι ἂν τούτων, τοῦ μὲν Παλαμῆδους τοσαύτην σοφίαν καὶ σύνεσιν ἐπιδεδειγμένου, δολοφονηθέντος δὲ ἀδίκως.

And it is on the basis of this name [sc. Nauplia], it is said, that the myth of Nauplius and his sons has been fabricated by the more recent writers of myth, for Homer would not have failed to mention these, if Palamedes had displayed such wisdom and sagacity, and if he was unjustly and treacherously murdered (*Geog.* VIII 6,2, transl. H.L. Jones).

There is no doubt that Strabo follows here an argument of Aristarchus: it was the typical Aristarchean stance that most stories not mentioned by Homer but found in the works of later poets (οἱ νεώτεροι) were a post-Homeric invention.⁴⁵ When Achilles claims exactly the contrary, that is that the myth of Palamedes was not younger but older than Homer,⁴⁶ this too is therefore not so much a critique of Homer's handling of the legend of Troy as a refutation of a one-sided interpretation of the Homeric poems.

It may well be that not every reader will be willing to follow every one of the above arguments (or, conversely, that some important ancient discussion has been overlooked). But on the whole it seems undeniable that there is always a philological discussion or literary development behind Apollonius' questions and behind the answers he gets from Achilles. Philostratus' five questions, which at first seemed radically different from Lucian's questions about the life and the epics of Homer, therefore at the end turn out to have a rather similar focus. The message of this section of the *Vita Apollonii* seems indeed to be that in *Homericis* historical questions are in truth philological questions, because there is no reality behind the Homeric epics that could be investigated with the help of historiographical methods. There is one further hint in favour of this interpretation: just as in Lucian *VH* 2,20 the fifth question has a special status and serves to show the futility of all this Homeric scholarship, so too in *VA* IV 16 the fifth question is different from the others, insofar as Apollonius himself asks right away about Homer (and not about the historical truth) and thus shows that the first four questions already pointed in this philological direction. So here too, as in *VH* 2,20, the fifth question has the character of an 'Abbruchsformel': there will be no further need for questions of the same kind.

Of course, questions about the truth behind the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* continued to be asked, not least by Philostratus himself in his *Heroicus*. But they have the same ironic quality as the five questions in *VA* IV 16, and it is beyond doubt that the two works come from the same person. This too is perhaps clearest in the last question. But whereas

⁴⁵ For this principle of Aristarchus see Severyns 1928:83–101 (for the derivation of Strabo's passage from Aristarchus see Severyns 58 and 375).

⁴⁶ For Palamedes' role in the development of the legend of Troy see the more recent work by Usener 1994, Kakridis 1995, and Schlange-Schöningen 2006. Modern research indeed tends to confirm Philostratus' view that Palamedes belonged to a pre-Homeric stratum of the legend, but was left out by Homer for poetical reasons.

the complicity between Homer and Odysseus is only alluded to in IV 16, the *Heroicus* speaks of an explicit deal between poet and hero. We could therefore assume that the version in the *Heroicus* is the older one (perhaps even found in some previous author's work) and that IV 16 merely summarises the more explicit version, and this may seem the more natural assumption. But the opposite assumption, that Philostratus developed his own version first given in IV 16, is equally possible. For Philostratus could well be telling us in IV 16 that Homer, who dedicated a whole epic to Odysseus, avoided speaking of Palamedes in order not to undermine his own work, and only some time later, when writing the *Heroicus*, made up the story of the deal. As we tried to show above, the whole scene of Apollonius visiting Achilles seems to be triggered by Caracalla's visit of the mound of the hero, by a similar visit of Homer in the legend, and by Lucian's five questions put to Homer. It would have been a complicated process first to write the *Heroicus*, then to resume this epic theme in the *Vita Apollonii* and to combine it with all the references to Caracalla, to the Homer of the legend and to Lucian. All in all, it is certainly more economical to assume that Philostratus first wrote the *Vita Apollonii* and so got the idea of treating the topic of the Trojan War in more detail in another work. Furthermore, this conclusion is in keeping with the few chronological data we possess about the *Vita Apollonii* and the *Heroicus*. For the *Vita Apollonii* was commissioned by Julia Domna⁴⁷ and was therefore at least started before her death in the spring of 217, and the *Heroicus* mentions an athlete and his exploits at the Olympic games of (most probably) 217, and therefore was at least finished only after the summer of 217.⁴⁸

Philostratus and his engagement with Homer have been the object of quite a lively discussion in the last five to ten years. This discussion has naturally centred mainly on the *Heroicus*, but could, of course, be repeated with respect to VA IV 11–16 and indeed, as we are trying to show, would get an extra momentum if extended to the other of the brilliant works of the sophist. The leading scholar in this discussion has been Gregory Nagy, supported by his former students at Harvard University like Casey Dué and the two translators of the *Heroicus*, Jennifer Maclean and Ellen Aitken. According to this reading Philostratus (even as Dictys, the supposed author of the *Ephemeris belli Troiani*) has

⁴⁷ Philostratus I 3.1.

⁴⁸ Philostratus *Her.* 15,8–10 (for the dating of the episode see Jüthner 1909:87f).

the serious intention of correcting the Homeric account of the Trojan War and supplementing or replacing it with a new account based on local knowledge and especially on the various oracles and shrines of hero-worship located near Ilium.⁴⁹

A number of arguments could be raised against this claim. First, it seems that neither the author of the *Ephemeris* nor Philostratus was very serious about correcting and replacing Homer. Dictys, the alleged author of the *Ephemeris*, seems indeed to be identical with the false Cretan of the lying-tales of the *Odyssey* and is thus by definition a liar and no defender of the truth.⁵⁰ Likewise the *Heroicus* of Philostratus abounds in ironic features that completely undermine the basic claim to know better than Homer;⁵¹ such an attitude of irony towards one's own claim seems typical for the whole imperial genre of 'epanorthosis' or 'Schwindelliteratur', as can also be seen from the *Troikos logos* of Dio Chrysostomus or Lucian's *Gallus*.

Second, the opposition between Homer and Philostratus, that the Harvard scholars construct, is anyway questionable, because Philostratus is not interested merely in Homer's representation of the Trojan War but also in the accounts given by many post-Homeric poets and writers like Pindar, Gorgias, Euripides, Aelius Aristides and a number of others.⁵² What Philostratus seems to aim at is not a simple refutation of Homer, but a complete canvas of the Trojan War with colours taken from all segments of the Greek literary (and philological) tradition dealing with the legend of Troy. As he himself put it, his work aimed at being an "echo" in "all modes".⁵³

⁴⁹ Maclean & Aitken 2001:LXXV ("Philostratus makes a strong argument for taking local tradition seriously as a source of truth over against the poems of Homer. He is saying, in effect, that if you consult those who live on the Hellespont, in the Chersonesus and the Troad, as well as those who live near the sanctuaries of the heroes, you will obtain knowledge more accurate than that which you hear from the poets, including Homer."); Dué & Nagy 2004:54f ("Philostratus' *Heroikos* is similar [sc. to the *Ephemeris*] in that there are no parodic features that undermine the authority of the framing narrative."... "Thus both the Dictys narrative and the *Heroikos* make use of an authoritative heroic source who, in communication with the participants in the Trojan War, corrects and supplements the Homer-centric understanding...").

⁵⁰ See Grossardt 1998:364–393 (accepted by Merkle 1999:163 with note 28, against his original position).

⁵¹ See Grossardt 2006:74–83.

⁵² See the full discussion in Grossardt 2006:99–116.

⁵³ See Grossardt 2004 and Grossardt 2006:117–120, based on Philostratus *Her.* 25,2 (πάντας ψῆλαι τοὺς ποιητικοὺς τῶν τρόπων, 'to sing in all poetical modes') and

But, thirdly, if we also include the passage of VA IV 11–16 in our investigation, we notice that the opposition between Homer and Philostratus is questionable for yet another reason. For there is not just one Homer, but rather two Homers, the Homer of the epic and the Homer of the legend. The Homer of the epic may have been challenged by Philostratus, at least on the surface of the text. But the Homer of the legend is not challenged at all, but is rather made the basis for Philostratus' own story of Apollonius visiting Achilles, and by extension, the basis of the *Heroicus* too. There can be no clear-cut opposition between Homer's *Iliad* and Philostratus' *Heroicus*, because there are always the Homer of the *Vita Romana* and the Apollonius of the *Vita Apollonii* bridging the gap between them.

The overall title of this collection of essays is *Theios Sophistes*. So we may ask at the end whether Apollonius was really a θεῖος σοφιστής. Σοφιστής? Yes, certainly, for who would have been a better public speaker? Θεῖος? Yes, that too, but perhaps mainly insofar as Homer, too, was θεῖος.

Appendix: the origin of the story of Homer's visit to the mound of Achilles

The question remains how the story of Homer's visit to the mound of Achilles could have originated. One clue to this story is Homer's work as a shepherd before he was made a poet. This very much recalls the beginning of Hesiod's *Theogony*, where we are told that Hesiod was consecrated a poet by the Muses while tending his herds near Mount Helicon (*Th.* 22f: αἱ νύ ποθ' Ἡσίοδον καλὴν ἐδίδαξαν ἀοιδήν, // ἄρνας ποιμαίνονθ' Ἑλικῶνος ὑπο ζαθέοιο, "they [sc. the Muses] once taught Hesiod beautiful song, when he was tending his sheep beneath holy Helicon"). The motif found in the *Vita Romana* therefore belongs to the same large class of stories about the consecration of a poet as the *Theogony*⁵⁴ and was perhaps even directly influenced by it. Another feature of easily recognizable origin is the stress laid by the *Vita Romana* on the second set of weapons Achilles wears when showing himself to

Her. 55,3 (Achilles' song to the goddess Echo); for the second aspect see also Miles 2005b:71–73.

⁵⁴ For the consecration of Hesiod and its parallels in the Greek and Near-Eastern traditions see West 1966:159f.

Homer (τοῖς δευτέροις ὅπλοις κεκοσμημένος). For Achilles losing his original weapons and getting new ones was not a traditional epic motif but most probably an invention by the poet of the *Iliad*.⁵⁵ As with the motif of Homer's blindness discussed above, we notice again that the legends about Homer not least depend on the Homeric text itself.

There is still, however, the peculiar feature of the poet learning his songs at the grave of one of the heroes involved in the events. My supposition is that this is a 'Wandermythos' about the origin of a sacred text, whose nearest parallel can be found in the medieval Irish tradition, in the story about the origin of Ireland's most famous epic *Táin Bó Cuailnge*. According to the explanation given in the *Book of Leinster* (twelfth century), the knowledge of the complete song had been lost and only parts of it were still available.⁵⁶ That was why the young bard Murgein visited the grave of Fergus, one of the main heroes of the events mentioned in the *Táin*, called upon him, and thus got to know the whole *Táin* ("Muirgen chanted a poem to the gravestone as though it were Fergus himself. [...] A great mist suddenly formed around him—for the space of three days and nights he could not be found. And the figure of Fergus approached him in fierce majesty, with a head of brown hair [...] Fergus recited him the whole *Táin*, how everything had happened from start to finish [...]").⁵⁷ If the legend of Homer and Achilles attested in the *Vita Romana* and in the *Scholia in Platonem* is indeed part of the same mythical tradition as the story of Murgein and Fergus, then it has been hellenized and rationalized and the motif of the inspiration has been transferred from the hero to the Muses (who, however, still act at the hero's grave). In making the resurrected hero himself the source of the knowledge, Philostratus therefore instinctively recreated the original pattern or (perhaps less probably so) still had at his disposal an alternative version which had kept this basic trait more faithfully than the *Vita Romana* or the *Scholia*.

⁵⁵ See Kakridis 1961.

⁵⁶ This is another typical feature which recalls the story of the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* out of scattered fragments by Lycurgus or Peisistratus (cp. e.g. Josephus *Ap.* 1,2; Plutarchus *Lyc.* 4,5–6; Aelianus *VH* 13,14; *Anthologia Palatina* 11,442, and Cicero *De oratore* 3,137); see Nagy 1996:69–75 and Dué & Nagy 2004:56f, who point to the parallels between this Greek tradition and Irish, Iranian, and Indian stories about the origin of sacred books (against the older explanation of Merkelbach 1952, who had discussed the references given above within his analytical hypothesis about the multiple authorship of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*).

⁵⁷ Translation taken from Kinsella 1970:1f (for a German translation and for important background information see Zimmer 1887:434f).

AUTHOR AND NARRATOR: FICTION AND METAFICTION IN PHILOSTRATUS' *VITA APOLLONII**

WANNES GYSELINCK & KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN

Role-playing in Second Sophistic Literature

Philostratus wrote his *Vita Apollonii* in an age of *hypokrisis* (ὑπόκρισις), 'role-playing'. In his *Vitae Sophistarum*,¹ our author distinguishes between the 'Old Sophistic' (ἀρχαία σοφιστική) and the 'Second Sophistic' on the basis of the latter's preference for performing 'types' and acting out the role of historical characters.² In the highly competitive environment of the Second Sophistic, sophists were judged by their audience and peers on their ability to convincingly perform fictionalised discourses of what certain historical or pseudo-historical characters might have said in a given situation. The rhetorical school exercise of *èthopoia* (ἠθοποιία) became a highly prestigious stage event. The positive evaluation of a sophistic performance by peers required on the one hand a *suspension of disbelief*, an illusion through sophistic artifice, and on the other hand a sharp awareness of the well-applied rhetorical skill and therefore of the artificiality of the declamation.³ Sophistic declamation is thus the

* We would like to thank Graeme Miles and Ruth Webb for their valuable corrections and suggestions, and Karen Ní Mheallaigh for kindly sending us unpublished work.

¹ T. Whitmarsh 1998:204, "the work of an ingenious author, every bit as sophistic as the subjects of his text." The dazzling formal diversity of this sophistic enterprise, a collection of variations on a theme ("sketching the *èthos* of a sophist") is a wonderful demonstration of the principle of *poikilia*, central to Second Sophistic aesthetics. See A. Billault 2000:54, "Dans les notices les plus longues, il fait alterner l'exposition des renseignements historiques et le récit des épisodes marquants d'une vie et obtient un effet d'entrelacement, qui, comme la teneur des différents éléments est à chaque fois nouvelle, ne peut manquer de surprendre le lecteur." M.D. Campanile (1999) argues that, although the historical framework of the *Vitae Sophistarum* is reliable, the actual portraits betray an undeniable literary stamp and sophisticated rhetorical manipulation.

² Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum* I 481: ἡ δὲ μετ' ἐκείνην [...] τοὺς πένητας ὑπετυπώσατο καὶ τοὺς πλουσίους καὶ τοὺς ἀριστέας καὶ τοὺς τυράννους καὶ τὰς ἐς ὄνομα ὑποθέσεις, ἐφ' ἃς ἡ ἱστορία ἄγει ("But the sophistic that followed it [...] sketched the types of the poor man and the rich, of princes and tyrants, and handled arguments that are concerned with definite and special themes for which history shows the way", trans. W.C. Wright).

³ R. Webb 2006a refines the interpretations by E.L. Bowie 1974 and T. Schmitz 1999 of the sophist's attitude towards the prestigious Greek past and stresses the contemporaneity

performance of a double identity, that of the fictional character chosen from the sophistic repertoire, and at the same time that of a sophist expressing an idealised Hellenism, expressed by the quasi-effortless demonstration of rhetorical skill by the sophist.⁴ In recent years the subtleties of constructing, idealising and questioning identities in Second Sophistic literature have been equally subtly interpreted, going far beyond naïve biographical readings. These interpretations have revealed how for example Dio Chrysostom takes up a variety of rhetorical *personae* suited to the communicative situation. Tim Whitmarsh astutely observes that when Dio stages himself as a philosopher with undeniable Socratic traits:

[...] this Socratic mask is not [...] intended to fool his audience: fraudsters rarely advertise their techniques as prominently as Dio marks his own Socraticism. Rather, Dio is carefully constructing a playful interaction between the randomness and naïveté that he implies with such regularity and the didactic authority of the ancients texts that so prominently inform his account.⁵

Similar sympathetic scrutinising has revealed the author of the *Corpus Philostrateum* to be equally fond of role-playing. An obvious example is of course his fictional dialogue *Heroicus*, but the *Epistulae eroticae* form an interesting case too. Patricia Rosenmeyer writes that “Philostratus’ self-presentation as a letter writer unmediated by other assumed voices represents a radical departure from the structure of other epistolary collections [...], where both writer and addressee were fictional.”⁶ Unlike

of the practice of declamation: “the representation of the past [...] is just one aspect of a multifaceted art. Above all, the form of representation involved in declamation was a creative one: the mimesis of classical models, understood not as the production of secondary copies but as an active process resulting in a new creation, judged by contemporary standards” (45).

⁴ R. Webb (2006a:45) aptly defines this sophistic Greek identity as “the shared knowledge of techniques and practices that constituted declamation.” Cf. T. Whitmarsh 2001:178, commenting upon the Greek Gaul Favorinus: “To ‘Hellenize’, to ‘be Greek’, is to seem Greek: all identities are fictions narrated and performed in the present.” See also M.W. Gleason 1995.

⁵ T. Whitmarsh 2001:162. For a sophisticated interpretation of Philostratus’ ambiguous portrayal of Dio in his *Vitae Sophistarum* see T. Whitmarsh 1998:204–210. See also F. Jouan 1993 and C. Krause 2003: “Dion entkleidet oder bekleidet sein rhetorisches Ich gewisser Dinge. Er entwirft seine eigene Person im Schauspiel der Rede. Er übernimmt in seinen Reden verschiedenen Rollen, die er je nach Redekontext und Intention unterschiedlich gestaltet” (149).

⁶ P.A. Rosenmeyer 2001:324 and 337, “if this is autobiography in letters, it shows a fragmented life and a chameleon-like character.”

Aelian or Alciphron, Philostratus does not 'hide' behind the (explicitly) fictionalised *personae* of for example a farmer or a fisherman, but creates highly sophisticated love letters in which he simply poses as a letter writer by creating a convincing and *probable* communicative situation. In fact he explores every single amorous situation that involves letter writing. The author's pursuit of exhaustiveness becomes clear for example in letters 1 and 4, which taken together form a demonstration of *in utramque partem disputare* about "whether a lover should send roses to his beloved, or not." Patricia Rosenmeyer comments that "it is difficult to suspend disbelief and accept these letters as effective communications, 'sincere' love letters rather than poetic showpieces" (325). Interestingly, she concludes:

[...] either we are meant to enjoy the (self-) contradiction, as we read Philostratus' collection as a whole, or we may choose to imagine the fictional situation of each individual addressee [...]. But in Philostratus, we must face the possibility that such artistic unity is not his goal; rather, he writes in his own voice without regard for linear consistency or sustained self-characterization. The letters are openly rhetorical, full of tricky arguments and surprises, like a good court case. [...] At stake in Philostratus' collection is not 'sincerity' or unity of purpose but rather the exact opposite: particularity, artistic skill, variety, and enjoyment of words (329).

As in his treatment of the *Lives of the sophists*, Philostratus' literary approach seems inspired by the principle of *poikilia* (ποικιλία).

In the love letters Philostratus is posing as a sophist in love, in the *Imagines* he poses as a sophist in a picture gallery. The text, in the words of Ruth Webb, "represents 'what a cultivated Sophist might say' in front of a collection of mainly mythological pictures."⁷ Whereas in the love letters a reader can detect the authorial pretence, not only from the intertextual sophistication, but simply from the apparent contradictions in the collection, in the *Imagines* another strategy is at work to foreground the literary artistry. The work opens with a formal prologue, comparable to that of the *Vita Apollonii*, in which the narrating voice addresses his reader with a short (and anti-Platonic) introduction to art and *mimesis*, constructing the authoritative and reliable *èthos* of a skilled speaker and art connoisseur, after which he sketches the enunciative situation of his

⁷ R. Webb 2006b:119. In her conclusion she writes: "It [sc. the *Imagines*] is not a record of a spontaneous improvisation in front of paintings, but a carefully constructed *mimesis* of such a performance" (132).

epideixis (ἐπίδειξις, prol. 4). The narrator explains that he delivered the speeches that follow to the son of his host in whose luxurious villa he was lodging during the public games in Naples. At the end of the prologue the narrator addresses the younger men accompanying the son in direct speech: “Let me put the boy in front and address to him my effort at interpretation.” By quoting himself and thus embedding his own voice as a second narrator in his prologue, the speaker of the prologue brings about “the transformation of the reader’s role from privileged addressee to eavesdropper.”⁸ The doubling of speakers (narrators) and listeners (narratees) in its turn creates the ideal conditions for a particularly interesting form of literary communication: “Outside the fictional situation there is another act of communication taking place between the real audience of reader or listeners (the original Roman audience of the piece, or its later readers/listeners) and the historical author who composed the words.”⁹ When this literary technique of alienation and artistic foregrounding prompts the reader to reflect on the text’s fictionality and his own role as a reader (“a person with a book in his hand”),¹⁰ we are dealing with metafiction.¹¹

⁸ R. Webb 2006b:119. Aristotle defines the role of the listener of the epideictic genre as a spectator (ὁ δὲ περὶ τῆς δυνάμεως ὁ θεωρὸς, *Rhet.* 1358b8). See L. Pernot 1993:29, “l’auditeur épideictique n’est que spectateur ou examinateur (theōros) du talent déployé par l’orateur (peri tēs dunameōs); au mieux il est ‘une sorte de juge’, mais qui n’a qu’à juger la qualité du discours [...]” A rhetorical *epideixis* requires the listener to remain at a certain distance which allows him to enjoy or judge the rhetorical virtuosity of the speaker. In the *Imagines* the doubling of narrator and audience has exactly this effect.

⁹ R. Webb 2006b:119.

¹⁰ J.R. Morgan 1993:215, commenting on similar strategies of artistic foregrounding in the Greek novels.

¹¹ L. Hutcheon 1980:1, “(m)etafiction” [...] is fiction about fiction—that is, fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative and/or linguistic identity.” A beautiful instance of Philostratean metafictionality in the *Imagines* is the description of the painting of Narcissus, which begins with the sophist urging the boy to read what is written/painted (γράφω) on the petals of the Hyacinth (*Im.* I 24). Ruth Webb suggests a particularly appealing interpretation: “[...] for the external audience, the injunction to ‘read’ is a direct admission of the textuality of the *Imagines* [...] After the heavy winks he has given us in Narkissos, the author, Philostratos, allows his own voice to break through for a moment before resuming the fictional voice of the Sophist (131).” See J. Elsner 1995/1997²:38ff. and also J. Elsner 2000b:264–265. See also the *ekphrasis* in VA II 20 and *Heroicus* 2, 7, where the grapes in the vinetender’s intertextually loaded garden flourish “as if in a painting/text” (ὥσπερ γεγραμμένα).

*The Vita Apollonii and the Distinction of Fiction*¹²

The VA is obviously the sophistic *magnum opus* of a virtuoso-writer, who brings many strategies into action to foreground his art. The narrating voice of our story, who presents himself as a professional writer, is quite clear about his serious intentions. In his introduction he explains how he got to write the life of Apollonius and what his aims are. He wants to write an account to bring honour to Apollonius, and to inform his inquisitive reader about the real life of his hero. Philostratus, on the other hand, is a serious author, perhaps known to his audience or reader as the author of other sophisticated texts such as the *Vitae Sophistarum*, *Imagines* or the *Heroicus*: he is a virtuoso-writer, and he wants his reader to acknowledge that. It has often been noted that the complex narrative situation of the *Vita Apollonii* functions as a *Beglaubigungsapparat* or “*plausibility enhancing-device*”.¹³ The clever combination of a professional (and therefore objective) primary narrator and the naïve (and therefore trustworthy) memoirs of the Assyrian Damis gives Philostratus the double advantage of both the credibility of an eyewitness account and the authority of a professional and highly educated writer.

The Damis-source, however, does not just function as a ‘credibility device’; at the same time it enables Philostratus to highlight his literary art in a subtle way. In his introduction he stresses that he was commissioned only to *rewrite* (μεταγράψαι) a clear but badly written account, to upgrade it stylistically, in short: to turn it into a work of art.

μεταγράψαι τε προσέταξε τὰς διατριβὰς ταύτας καὶ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας αὐτῶν ἐπιμεληθῆναι, τῷ γὰρ Νινίῳ σαφῶς μὲν, οὐ μὴν δεξιῶς γε ἀπηγγέλλετο (or ἀπήγγελλτο, see Gerard Boter’s contribution, p. 55).

She set me to transcribe these works of Damis and to take care over their style, since the style of the man from Ninus was clear but rather unskillful (I 3).¹⁴

At this stage, the narrator claims full responsibility for the style and rhetorical make-up (or make-over) of the text, relegating the responsibility

¹² By using the term ‘fiction’ in reference to certain features of the VA, we obviously do not mean to imply that the represented story lacks any relationship with the historical reality of the first and third century. However, the much debated question of the historicity of the sources is, at least for our discussion, of no relevance.

¹³ See notably T. Knoles 1981:62; T. Whitmarsh 2001:229; T. Whitmarsh 2004:426–430. On the VA as a fictional text, see notably E.L. Bowie 1978.

¹⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, we will be using the text and translation by Jones.

for the content to his trustworthy eye-witness. The reader might interpret these authorial notes on the ‘making of’ the *Vita Apollonii* as a negotiation by the author of a license to ‘elaborate rhetorically’, which, in the context of a *bios* with an encomiastic bias¹⁵ might well be seen as ‘a license to fictionalise’. This would account for the elaborate Platonic dialogues and speeches that form a large portion of the VA, and the encyclopaedically informed travel stories, in short, the philostratean material that led Meyer to conclude that the VA was nothing more than “echte Sophistenarbeit.”¹⁶ This philostratean material is part of the sophist’s strategy to adequately sketch an idealised *ēthos* of a Greek philosopher, worthy of the attention of the Empress Julia Domna, to whom the Damis papers are said to have been brought. It should be noted that the narrator characterises the empress, *not* so much as interested in philosophy, but as someone who “admired and encouraged all rhetorical discourse” (I 3).¹⁷ Moreover, the *topos* of the ‘recovered source brought to a person of high renown’ places the VA in a tradition of pseudo-documentary fiction that seems to have flourished in Greek literature of the first and second centuries CE, with such texts as Antoinius Diogenes’ *Wonders beyond Thule*, Dares’ *De Exidio Troiae Historiae* and Dictys’ *Ephemeris Belli Troiani*.¹⁸ Karen Ní Mheallaigh observes

¹⁵ The narrator formulates his encomiastic intentions explicitly in the prologue: ἐχέτω δὲ ὁ λόγος τῷ ἀνδρὶ τιμὴν, VA I 3. See P. Robiano 2001, *passim*.

¹⁶ E. Meyer 1917:378.

¹⁷ In the VS Philostratus characterises the Empress interested not so much in rhetoric but rather in philosophy, calling her “the philosophic Julia” (τῆς φιλοσόφου Ἰουλίας, VS II 622), because she gathered around her a famous and much debated circle of “geometricians and philosophers” (γεωμέτραις τε καὶ φιλοσόφοις, *ibid.*), interpreted by Flinterman 1995 (following Burkert 1972:54) as a reference to “Platonic or Pythagorean philosophers” (23). This difference in characterisation reveals once more that our author moulds the historical data with a view on his communicative purposes. Nevertheless, as Penella 1979b, Flinterman 1995 and De Lannoy 1997 argue, the *Corpus Philostrateum* betrays the conviction “qu’il n’y a pas d’incompatibilité entre la philosophie et la rhétorique/sophistique” (De Lannoy 1997:2439). It should be added that Philostratus’ interest in philosophy involves mostly literary or rhetorical aspects: “Philostratus primarily evaluates philosophers in terms of their literary and/or rhetorical merits” (Flinterman 1995:32), as is shown in his *Letter to Julia Domna* (ep. 73), a defence of the sophists against the criticism of Plutarch. See also Anderson 1979b.

¹⁸ It is a curious fact and perhaps no coincidence that authors of pseudo-documentary fiction show a preference for names beginning with a *delta*: Dares, Dictys, Deinias and Damis (counting Dio out, whose 11th discourse is a piece of pseudo-documentary fiction as well). Interestingly, the Latin version of Dares’ *De Exidio Troiae Historiae* of which a Greek version circulated in the 2nd century CE is preceded by a fictional Latin prologue by the translator “Cornelius Nepos”, addressing his friend “Sallustius”, in which he states that “he strove to be as faithful to Dares’ original simple style as possible lest, by altering

that “in increasingly self-conscious fiction, such *Beglaubigungsstrategien* are converted also into signals to the knowing reader, advertising the fictionality of the text. Pseudo-documentarism deepens the reader’s pleasure by reifying the fiction [...], yet paradoxically, its emphasis on the text’s materiality, and the constant reminder of the very process of reading itself, threatens to undermine that fiction.”¹⁹

The prologue of the *Vita Apollonii* serves, then, several functions. Firstly, it makes both the story and its genesis plausible and convincing by providing, what Winkler called, “evidential accountability.”²⁰ Secondly, it focuses the reader’s attention not only to the matter of the story but also to the manner of the story-telling. The introduction of ‘Damis’ as a pseudo-documentarist device weakens the illusion of non-fictionality that draws the reader into the diegetic world. It fictionalises not so much the core-story about Apollonius (who, after all, must have been known as a philosopher or magician of the recent past) as it does the frame-story about how the VA came into being. As the author both creates and undermines this illusion of non-fictionality, he places the reader at an admiring distance. Implicitly, Philostratus appears to be saying: *lector intende. Laetaberis!* (Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, *Metamorphoses* 1).

At the end of the prologue the author changes his narratorial pretence from that of a rewriter, to a ‘critical editor with his sources at hand’, adopting what John Morgan coined a “*historiographical pose*.”²¹ This shift of self-presentation ambiguously results in the narrator commenting and interpreting events and speeches of Apollonius, whereas the reader might suspect that these are all invented or at least moulded by the

the text in any way, it should appear to be his own invention instead” (Ní Mheallaigh: 2008). It seems to have been a conventional *topos* for (pseudo-) translators to apologise for the stylistic inferiority of the translation compared with the original, which, as Ní Mheallaigh observes, is turned around by “Nepos”, posing as a humble translator who prioritises authenticity over his own literary ambitions. Remarkably, the narrator of the VA deviates from this *pretence of humbleness* and self-consciously presents his stylistic upgrade as a bonus for the reader, thus foregrounding his own literary skill.

¹⁹ K. Ní Mheallaigh 2008. See also C. Gill and T.P. Wiseman (eds.) 1993.

²⁰ J.J. Winkler 1985:72. See also J.A. Francis 1998:434.

²¹ J.R. Morgan 1982:227. By avoidance of precision and giving alternative explanations *in fiction*, the author imitates authorial uncertainty, typical for historiography. Another strategy to strengthen this effect is the “*affectation of historiographical mannerisms*”, such as working in *ekphraseis* and digressions, alluding to familiar knowledge concerning psychology, history or geography and giving multiple explanations.

See also T. Whitmarsh (2004:424–426) for the Herodotean and Thucydidean pose adopted by the narrator.

author as part of his 'rewriting' and rhetorical upgrading.²² The narrator moreover frequently reflects on the style of Apollonius, in such a way that these passages can be taken as a stylistic programme set out by the author to characterise his protagonist.²³ A clear example can be found in the chapter preceding Apollonius' never performed apology (VIII 6), a reflection by the narrator on how wise men should defend themselves. If a wise man were to use the tricks of rhetoricians, his *èthos* would not be correctly performed (οὐ μοι δοκεῖ ὁ σοφὸς ὑγιῶς ἂν ὑποκρίνεσθαι τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἦθος). The narrator ends the programmatic stylistic and rhetorical outlines for the following speech with a typically Philostratean phrase: τοιόσδε ὁ λόγος δόξει τοῖς γε μὴ μαλακῶς ἀκροασομένοις ἐμοῦ τε καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρός ("this is how this speech will strike anyone who listens to me and the Master in a virile way"), a bipartition that clearly hints towards the real author of the upcoming speech.

An example of the dissonance between the games of the sophisticated author and the historiographical pose of the narrator can be found in the first book. Apollonius visits the Eretrians in Cissia, and comforts the hardship of these deported Greeks, descendants of a seafaring nation, now trapped within the immeasurable ocean of the Cissian plane, who still cling to their Greek language and habits, although they are surrounded by barbarians. This forms part of a highly sophisticated (but entirely implicit) intertextual dialogue with Herodotus' *Historiae*.²⁴

²² The pleasure that arises when the reader perceives a gap between what the narrator purports to know (namely that he is in possession of Apollonius' speeches on the style of which he is eager to comment) and what the reader and the author know (namely that Philostratus should be held responsible for Apollonius' eloquence as displayed in the VA), can be compared with the irony in Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, a crime novel (with the reader cast as detective) in the guise of a fictitious edition of a fictitious poem written by the fictitious poet John Shade (1898–1959), supplemented with a commentary "by a friend of the poet", Dr Kinbote, an immigrant from (the fictitious) Zembla, "a Northern country", as the fictitious index teaches us. The commentator's whimsically eloquent comments upon the flashes of brilliance in the poem, can be taken as ironic self-compliments by the author on his own stylistic games.

²³ It is remarkable that Apollonius' self-confident discourse perfectly matches the apodictic style of the representatives of the "First Sophistic" drawn in the VS (compare I 480–481 and VA I 17; VIII 6): an "old school sophist" (ὁ παλαιὸς σοφιστής) speaks as someone who knows (ὡς εἰδῶς λέγει). Therefore he introduces his speeches with such tags as "οἶδα" καὶ τὸ "γινώσκω" καὶ "πάσαι διέσκεμμαι" καὶ "βέβαιον ἀνθρώπῳ οὐδέν." His style is therefore a sort of *mantikè* (τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ μαντικῇ). Apollonius, according to the narrator's discussion of his style, used similar introductory tags ("οἶδα" [...] καὶ "δοκεῖ μοι" καὶ "ποῖ φέρεσθε;" καὶ "χρὴ εἰδέναι"), and is said to have spoken ὥσπερ ἐκ τρίποδος (I 17). On Apollonius' rhetoric see A. Billaut 1993b and Henderson 2003.

²⁴ In VA I 21 Apollonius declares to the hostile Median satrap that his reason for travelling is "*historia*", which he repeats in front of the king (I 27). The Eretria-episode

Moreover, the fate of the Eretrians was a popular theme in Second Sophistic declamation: Apollonius' *consolatio* not only about but also in front of the (descendants of the) *real* Eretrians is a Second Sophistic dream come true.²⁵ The narrator mentions that the Eretrians still speak Greek and even build Greek altars in the shape of ships, on which, Damis mentions, they had inscribed elegiac verses. In an almost Lucianesque manner the narrator of the VA quotes these verses in full as though Damis had scribbled them down in his 'scrapbook'. Every well-read Greek would however recognise them as an epigram attributed to Plato (*Anthologia Palatina*, VII 256), which highlights even more the bookish atmosphere of the whole episode.²⁶

The Eretria passage, notwithstanding its obvious artificiality and sophistication, is however doubly authenticated by the narrator, firstly by the constant mentioning of 'Damis' as his source, and secondly by Apollonius himself, in a letter he supposedly wrote to Scopelianus,

is launched by Apollonius having a typically Herodotean dream about fishes on the shore screaming for help to a dolphin (I 23). This dream is mirrored by a dream of Vardanes, the (historical) Median king, who dreams just before Apollonius' arrival that he was Artaxerxes being visited by Themistocles (I 29).

²⁵ In the VA Apollonius is often cast in a situation where he can deliver speeches on topics that are mentioned in the VS as (evidently fictional) *hypotheses*. Apollonius' speeches however do not require the suspension of disbelief intrinsic to a sophistic declamation, but are represented as genuine responses to a given situation within a diegetic world for which a suspension of disbelief has been negotiated in the prologue of the VA. The implicit encomium on Hellas which Apollonius performs evoking the nostalgia of the Eretrian castaways, comes close to the fictive letter in the VS which Philostratus quotes in full as a typical *υπόθεσις* of Pollux of Naucratis, written by a young Greek boy to his father, where he expresses his longing for Hellas, after having been taken by the Persian king to Babylon to serve at his court as a eunuch. See also VS II 598 where Philostratus writes that the sophist Onomarchus could elaborate on the subject of a person falling in love with a statue (*ἔξεστι δὲ αὐτὸν θεωρεῖν ἐπὶ τοῦ τῆς εἰκόνης ἐρῶντος*), a subject also treated by Apollonius in the form of a diatribe against a man who fell in love with the Aphrodite of Cnidus (VA VI 40). Typically, this episode is introduced by the narrator with the phrase *Κάκεινα ἀξιοληγόμενυτα εὔρον τοῦ ἀνδρὸς* ("This too I have found worth mentioning about the Master"). See also G. Anderson 1986:129.

²⁶ The epigram is most likely not a copy of a 5th century inscriptional epitaph, but rather a Hellenistic literary exercise, see D.L. Page 1981:171–173. The Eretria-episode as a whole bears other Platonic reminiscences, for example to *Lg.* III, 698d, where Plato writes that the Persians formed a human chain to capture surviving Greeks as with a fishnet (*σαγγεύσαιεν*, see also *Hdt.* VI 31). Eretrians appearing in Apollonius' dream as fishes might also have had its roots in the codfish being their national symbol, also represented on their coins. Plutarch moreover writes that Themistocles compared the Eretrians during a war assembly just before the battle in Artemision with their fishes, both of which have no backbone (*Them.* 11.6 and *Apophth. Reg. et Imp.* 185e5). See also R.J. Penella 1974; K.G. Walker 2004:270–284 and T. Schirren 2005:232.

urging the sophist “to show them pity, and be ready even to shed tears whenever he improvises a speech on that subject (I 23).” Our sophisticated narrator hereafter comments: *ξυνῳδὰ δὲ τούτοις καὶ ὁ Δάμις περὶ τῶν Ἐρετριέων ἀναγέγραπεν* (Damis’ account of the Eretrians agrees with this, I 24).

The textual surface, then, shows all the trappings of sophistic (re)writing attributable to Philostratus, *including* an authenticating narrating voice *à la manière de* Herodotus. The author has constructed a narrating *persona* who lives in a diegetic world separated from that of his own story, but also not to be equated with the world of the actual writer, Philostratus, since this narrating voice does not always seem to be aware of the ‘literariness’ and sophistication of his own story. This gap between what the writer who created the sophisticated text obviously knew, and the more restricted knowledge of the narrating voice, can be interpreted as the author playing a role, pretending to know less than he knows. In short, certain incongruities and tensions in the text might encourage the reader or listener to distinguish between author and narrator. This is, as Dorrit Cohn phrases it in her eponymous book, the “distinction of fiction”.²⁷

The VA’s Communicative Situation in Narratological Terms

In the VA, two *histoires* can be abstracted from the text, creating two separate diegetic worlds. The core *histoire* is ‘the life of Apollonius as told by Damis and other sources, featuring Apollonius, Damis and others’, containing the allegedly historical *fabula* of the story. This core *histoire* is framed by or embedded in another *histoire*: the *writing of the Vita Apollonii*, starring a primary narrator, ‘a professional writer’,²⁸ who

²⁷ D. Cohn 1999. This distinction creates, in her words, a “uniquely stressful interpretive freedom” (130): “[in fictional texts] we are not obliged to attribute [...] incongruit[ies] to the author himself; we are free to attribute [them] to the narrator, now conceived, not as the author’s mouthpiece, but as an artfully created vocal organ—whose author is meanwhile tacitly communicating the correct interpretation to us behind the narrator’s back” (73).

²⁸ Precisely the staging of a narrator as a professional writer and therefore look-alike of Philostratus enhances the illusion of non-fiction created by the fictionalised narrative situation. Nevertheless, the separation of author and narrator, however close their resemblance, should be maintained. See G. Genette 1972:226, “même les références de Tristram Shandy à la situation d’écriture visent l’acte (fictif) de Tristram et non celui (réel) de Sterne; mais de façon à la fois plus subtile et plus radicale, le narrateur du Père Goriot n’ ‘est’ pas Balzac, même s’il exprime ça ou là les opinions de celui-ci, car

remains present as interpreter, exegete and critical editor during the entire course of the core-story. The framing *histoire* is thus an explicit 'narrativisation' of the *narration*, the telling of the core *histoire*. The primary narrator is presented as rewriting the Damis-source as a result of Julia Domna's commission. He is a *pepaideumenos* perfectly capable of explaining and interpreting even the most abstruse sayings of Apollonius. The primary narrator addresses a primary narratee who is not yet or not well informed about the true wisdom of Apollonius (I 3), "listens to the poets" (τοῖς γε ἀκούουσι τῶν ποιητῶν, I 4), but often needs explanation and a helping hand in recognising the allusions. This communication within the story world between primary narrator and narratee is mirrored on a higher level, in the real world, by the communication between a sophisticated author and a sophisticated reader or listener. Philostratus, the author, has contrived the complex narrative situation (including the *Beglaubigungs*-apparatus) and has subtly highlighted this artful construction via playful irony. He is responsible for the explicit and implicit intertextual games, making his one protagonist, Apollonius, perform cryptic allusions, thus creating opportunities for his other protagonist, his narrating but less informed alter-ego, to display his interpretive skills, comparable to those of the narrator in the *Imagines*. The author is also responsible for the metafictional hints in the *Vita Apollonii*, as part of the implicit communication between himself and the reader.

The passage immediately following the prologue might serve as an illustration (VA I 4). The primary narrator straightforwardly (i.e. without mentioning a source) tells us how the god Proteus appeared in a dream to the pregnant mother of Apollonius, prophesying that she would give birth to him, Proteus. The narrator explains to his reader by way of a *praeteritio* the 'obvious' meaning of this event:

ὅστις μὲν δὴ τὴν σοφίαν ὁ Πρωτεύς ἐγένετο, τί ἂν ἐξηγοίμην τοῖς γε ἀκούουσι τῶν ποιητῶν, ὡς ποικίλος τε ἦν καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλος καὶ κρείττων τοῦ ἀλῶναι, γινώσκειν τε ὡς ἐδόκει καὶ προγιγνώσκειν πάντα; καὶ μεμνήσθαι χρὴ τοῦ Πρωτέως, μάλιστα ἐπειδὴν προῖων ὁ λόγος δεικνύη τὸν ἄνδρα πλείω μὲν ἢ ὁ Πρωτεύς προγνόντα,...

ce narrateur-auteur est quelqu'un qui 'connaît' la pension Vauqueur, sa tenancière et ses pensionnaires, alors que Balzac, lui, ne fait que les imaginer: et en ce sens, bien sûr, la situation narrative d'un récit de fiction ne se ramène jamais à sa situation d'écriture."

Now for those who know the poets why should I describe how wise Proteus was, how shifting, multiform and impossible to catch, and how he seemed to have all knowledge and foreknowledge? But the reader must bear Proteus in mind, especially when the course of my story shows that my hero had the greater prescience of the two (I 4).

On a first level this interpretive guideline serves as a proleptic characterisation of the yet unborn hero of the story, which is going to be consolidated in the upcoming books.²⁹ On the communicative level of the author/reader this passage can be interpreted in varying ways.³⁰ The *poikilia* attributed to Apollonius is somewhat strange in view of the way in which Apollonius prides himself on being a “flat character” in his tautological *adagium* that he is always like himself (ἐμᾶντῳ ὅμοιος, twice in VIII 7). This is repeated and commented upon by the narrator when he formulates his opinion (ἡγοῦμαι) that Apollonius is a true sage because he always remained himself (τὸ μὴ αὐτὸς μεθίστασθαι).³¹ The circumlocutory exegesis of the narrator seems to indicate that upcoming intertextual analogies between Apollonius and icons of Hellenic culture are never ‘just there’ but need to be interpreted in a similar vein. It is not Apollonius who is shifting and multiform, but rather the author’s intertextual characterisation of Apollonius.³²

²⁹ Apollonius tells Iarchas about his former life as pilot of an Egyptian ship, living on the island of Pharos, “where Proteus once lived” (III 24). In book seven Domitian is about to fetter Apollonius, and accuses him of wizardry. He tells Apollonius that he will not release him until he has turned into water, some wild animal or into a tree: “καὶ ἀνήσω γε οὐ πρότερον,” εἶπεν “ἢ ὕδωρ γενέσθαι σε ἢ τι θηρίον ἢ δένδρον.” (“Yes,” replied the other, “I will not set you free until you turn into water, or some animal or tree,” VII 34); every well-read Greek would recognise an unmistakable allusion to book 4 of the *Odyssey* (456–458), where Menelaus tells Telemachus how he captured Proteus but only after the old man of the sea changed into a lion, a panther, a boar, water and finally a tree.

³⁰ For Proteus as *comparans* for sophists since Plato see T. Whitmarsh 2001:228n184. Another connotation of Proteus is that of the archetypal wizard (*goès* or *magos*). It is precisely this reputation that was undeservedly attributed to Apollonius, an accusation the narrator is very eager to refute; see J.J. Flinterman 1995:52–53. The scholion on the *Odyssey* is illustrative: Proteus’ shifting forms or *poikilia* is reduced to mere *magia*: οὐκ ἀληθῶς μετέβαλεν, ἀλλὰ φαντασίαν ἐποίει τέχνη μαγικῇ. μάγος γὰρ ὢν καὶ ποικίλος ἐκ μαγειῶν ἐδοκίμαζεν αὐτὸν [...]. See also T. Schirren 2005:48–49, who reads the Proteus parallel as an implicit subversion of the apparent encomiastic tendency of the VA.

³¹ See I 34 and 36; II 40; VI 35: τὸ μὴ οὐχ ὁμοίῳ φαίνεσθαι; τὸ μὴ αὐτὸς μεθίστασθαι.

³² On the Proteus-passage see esp. G. Miles 2005a:12, “The chapter on Proteus serves to alert the reader to these changing patterns of characterisation by allusion, and does so through identification with this first and in some respects central figure, Proteus. The technique of paralleling is itself announced by means of a mythic parallel.” See also G. Anderson 1986:235, “Apollonius performs the labours of Herakles, the voyages of

Moreover, '*poikilia*' is a crucial term and aesthetic criterion in Greek and especially Second Sophistic and Late Antique aesthetics.³³ In Philostratus' *Vitae Sophistarum* the splendor of the sophistic art is compared by Marcus of Byzantium to that of Iris with *poikilia* as *tertium comparationis*.³⁴ In the *Heroicus* the Phoenician connects the term *poikilia* with rhetorical or fictionalising elaboration, as an effect that causes pleasure and allows for a certain degree of "rewriting" (here μετασκευάσαι):

τὸ γὰρ μὴ ὑποτεθεῖσθαι ταῦτα τὸν Ὅμηρον, ἀλλὰ γεγονότων τε καὶ ἀληθινῶν ἔργων ἀπαγγελίαν μαρτυρεῖ ὁ Πρωτεσίλεως, πλὴν ὀλίγων ἃ δοκεῖ μᾶλλον ἐκὼν μετασκευάσαι ἐπὶ τῷ ποικίλῃν τε καὶ ἡδίῳ ἀποφῆναι τὴν ποίησιν.

Protesilaus testifies that Homer did not invent these things, but that he made a narrative of deeds that had happened and were genuine, except for a few of them, which he rather seems to transform purposefully so that his poetry appears more elaborate and pleasurable (*Her.* 43).³⁵

The use of the term '*poikilos*' as *tertium comparationis* in Philostratus' comparison (or rather equation) of Proteus '*Sophistes*' and Apollonius might therefore be read as a metafictional commentary by the author on the overall formal and stylistic versatility that he is about to display in writing the life of a champion of Hellenic culture.

We will discuss similar instances of textual self-observation and self-reflexivity, where the reader's attention is drawn to the work's status as an artefact and to their own interpretive role as a reader. Philostratus does this not only at the level of the frame-story, making his primary narrator comment on his act of writing and on earlier literature, for

Odysseus, the conquests of Alexander, the trial of Socrates and the transmigrations of Pythagoras, all in one. To these modest beginnings are added casual glimpses of Jesus Christ and Herodes Atticus. Not for nothing is Apollonius son of Proteus."

³³ On *poikilia* as aesthetic principle in Greek literature in general see M. Heath 1989, and particularly in the literary and visual arts of Late Antiquity see M. Roberts 1989.

³⁴ VS II 528. Philostratus elsewhere cites an excerpt out of what looks like an encomium to Proteus by the sophist Pollux as an illustration of his breathtaking style (VS II 592–593). Wright suggest in a note to his translation: "Pollux seems to have been declaiming on the versatility of the sophists." In Himerius' speech 68.9 (*Ad persequendam in dicendo varietatem*) Proteus is presented as a sophist, a skilled speaker, who defends himself by applying different rhetorical styles (Himerius plays with the double meaning of *ιδέα* as both style and form): δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ ὁ Πρωτεὺς σοφιστὴς τις τοὺς λόγους δεινὸς γενόμενος, ἐπειδὴ τις αὐτὸν μῶμος ἐκ φιλοσόφου γλώττης ἠνώχλησεν, εἰς πολλὰς ιδέας μερίσας τοὺς λόγους, ἵνα οὕτως ἐλέγχι τὰ σκώμματα.

³⁵ We quote the translation of the *Heroicus* by J.K.B. Maclean and E.B. Aitken 2001.

example the believability of Homer. In the core-story as well, especially in the discussions by his protagonists, issues are tackled that are central to the *narration* of the *Vita Apollonii*.³⁶ In our conclusion we will return to the possible functions of metafiction in a text such as the *Vita Apollonii*.

*Believe it or not: The Performance of Scepticism in the
Third Book of the VA*

Throughout the *Vita Apollonii* the narrator is unceasingly anxious about the believability of his story. He ends his encyclopaedic essay 'on snakes' in the third book with a refusal to write something about the age of snakes, because "this creature's length of life defies discovery, and if stated would defy belief" (III 8). This is of course one more little cog-wheel in the whole "Beglaubigungs-machinery". The knowledge of our primary narrator is, very explicitly, limited: he is not omniscient, and therefore not a typical narrator of fiction.³⁷ Quite often the narrator summons his reader to believe, or rather, to *not* disbelieve him, for example in book six where he says that we should not disbelieve his story about the satyr (μη ἀπιστῶμεν and οὔτε γὰρ ἡ πεῖρα ἀπιστητέα οὔτε ἐγώ, VI 27).

But belief in the *Vita Apollonii* is a funny thing: it can be summoned by the narrator for episodes of Apollonius' life, but also by his protagonist for Hephaestus' walking tripods (VI 11) as described in Homer's *Iliad*, or the fact that Heracles liberated Theseus from Hades (IV 46).

In the eighth book belief becomes an increasingly important notion, because here the philosophy of Apollonius is at stake. Is Apollonius' doctrine about the immortality of the soul really an ἀληθὴς λόγος

³⁶ We will not discuss the art theoretical conversations of Apollonius and Damis on *mimesis* and *phantasia*, as prerequisites both for the artist to create and the viewer/reader to perceive art (II 22; VI 19). These passages have been interpreted metafictionally, with caution by Graeme Miles (in this volume, pp. 129–160), and more sweepingly, by T. Schirren 2005:272–285 ("Der kunsttheoretische Diskurs als implizite Poetologie"). See also V. Platt forthcoming.

³⁷ See T. Knoles 1981:57. Philostratus is of course imitating Herodotus' "*non-committal stance*". See G.L. Moles 1993:95, "There is a general implication that he [sc. Herodotus] is concerned with truth [...] but he certainly does not emphasize truth. [...] Herodotus ostentatiously refuses to pass judgement on the truth or falsity of the previous accounts of the causes of enmity between Greeks and barbarians." See for example Herodotus *Historiae* IV 96.1 and VII 152.11–13.

(VIII 31) and does Apollonius practise what he preaches: is his soul really immortal? Apollonius, or rather his immortal soul, adequately demonstrates this in the last chapter of the *VA* for his sceptical disciple by appearing to him in a dream (VIII 31).

Philostratus gives certain indications about what to believe and what not. Both the narrator and the characters frequently show scepticism towards wondrous events or stories, an instance of what Whitmarsh has called a convergence between narrator and protagonist, for example in the way they gain authority by accepting or rejecting stories or explanations. Even Damis declares, during a conversation on elephants, that he would never have believed that a young boy could be in charge of an elephant, if he would have heard it from somebody else (II 11). *Autopsia* is indeed, since Herodotus, one of the most trustworthy sources for information. The reader of the *VA*, however, is a person with a book in his hand which contains a rewritten version of *memorabilia* by Damis, where he declares in *direct speech* to Apollonius that *he* would only believe his own eyes. This is not quite a Herodotean eye-witness account. The function of this staged scepticism is mainly to enhance the overall credibility of the story, and to strengthen the illusion of non-fictionality that makes a fiction convincing.

As Tim Whitmarsh has already pointed out, the India episode in the third book seems to show the reader how to read Indian *thaumata*, and by extension, the wonders of Apollonius.³⁸ The key chapters can be found at the beginning and at the end of book three, forming as it were a frame of scepticism around the book of the *VA* where the belief of the reader is strained at the most. Apollonius transgresses the edges of the known world, mapped by Alexander, and passes over from a *spatium historicum* to a *spatium mythicum*. The motif of travel in Herodotean fashion shifts smoothly into an almost Euhemerist utopia when Apollonius visits the dwellings of the Brahmins characterised as a mixture of Plato's dream come true and the Homeric Olympus.

It was moreover common knowledge that the typical *Indika*-literature was a fabulist's paradise. Strabo polemically writes: ἅπαντες μὲν τοίνυν οἱ περὶ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς γράψαντες ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ψευδολόγοι γεγόνασι

³⁸ T. Whitmarsh 2004:435, "The exploration in the Indian episode of the credibility of *thaumata* serves as a programmatic education in reading the miracle-working figure of Apollonius." In his discussion on the Indian books, E. Meyer (1917:376) throws up his hands in the air in despair: "Genug, wir sind in Gullivers Königreich Laputa und nicht in der realen Welt."

(“All those who write about India have shown themselves liars”, 2.1.9). Strabo’s stance is in itself a typical performance of the obligatory scepticism towards marvels from India, which grants him the authority to include them judiciously later on in his narrative.³⁹

At the beginning of the third book the narrator of the VA reports some essential data about India. He mentions among other things an Indian *thauma*, a cup made of the horns of wild asses, a piece of information which he ascribes to an anonymous source (*phasi*).⁴⁰ He adds that Apollonius says (*phèsi*) he has seen and admired the unicorns. This double authentication has the effect that both sources, the *phasi*-source and Apollonius, mutually strengthen each other’s credibility. Then follows, again, a little dialogue: Damis asks Apollonius if he really believes the story about the immortalising cup. Apollonius’ answer expresses a rational scepticism towards stories like this: he will believe it when he sees it.

Ἀπολλώνιος δὲ τὸ μὲν θηρίον ἑωρακέναι φησὶ καὶ ἄγασθαι αὐτὸ τῆς φύσεως, ἐρομένου δὲ αὐτὸν τοῦ Δάμιδος, εἰ τὸν λόγον τὸν περὶ τοῦ ἐκπώματος προσδέχοιτο, “προσδέξομαι” εἶπεν “ἢν ἀθάνατον μάθω τὸν βασιλέα τῶν δεῦρο Ἰνδῶν ὄντα.”

Apollonius says he saw the creature and admired its qualities, but when Damis asked him if he believed the story about the cup, he replied: ‘I will believe it, if I hear that the king of the Indians in these parts is immortal’ (III 2).

We find a similar exercise in poised belief at the end of the third book, where Apollonius asks Iarchas which Indian stories ought to be believed and which ones should be rejected. The primary narrator remarks in this context that the reader will benefit from neither believing nor disbelieving everything. This sounds like a programmatic motto for the whole *Vita Apollonii*.

³⁹ See J. S. Romm 1992:101: “Strabo begins his account of the trans-Hyphasis frontier on a sceptical note, claiming that because of [the authors’] ignorance and [the place’s] remoteness nothing accurate has been set down” (οὐκ ἀκριβοῦνται δέ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἄγνοϊαν καὶ τὸν ἐκτοπισμὸν λέγεται πάντ’ ἐπὶ τὸ μείζον ἢ τὸ τερατωδέστερον, 15.1.37). “But soon he seems strangely captivated by his own examples of this unreliability.” “Even when Strabo [...] attempts to show how Megasthenes ‘goes overboard’ (huperekriptōn) into the realm of the mythical’ he ends up only validating those excesses in his own narration” (ibid.).

⁴⁰ T. Whitmarsh (2004:427–428) notes the “lack of clear distinction between *phasi* = ‘Apollonius and Damis say’ and *phasi* = ‘tradition reports that.’”

Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ὅδε ὁ λόγος ἀναγέγραπται τῷ Δάμιδι σπουδασθεῖς ἐκεῖ περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰνδοῖς μυθολογουμένων θηρίων τε καὶ πηγῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων, μηδ' ἐμοὶ παραλειπέσθω, καὶ γὰρ κέρδος εἴη μήτε πιστεῦειν, μήτε ἀπιστεῖν πάσιν.

Damis also wrote up the following conversation that they had on the subject of the fabulous beasts, springs, and men of India. I should not therefore leave it out, since one might do well neither to believe nor to disbelieve all the details (III 45).

Is Philostratus suggesting here that we should even be judiciously sceptical towards the stories that Iarchas, the one character in the VA who is characterised as superior to Apollonius, *accepts*?⁴¹

There might also be an intertextual indication about what to believe and what to disbelieve. In his inventory of the sources of the Philostratan digressions and *paradoxa*, Hans Rommel concluded that a lot, if not most of the Indian *mirabilia* are derived from Ctesias, author of a *Persika* and an *Indika*.⁴² This writer, of whose works substantial excerpts remain in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, does not have a very good reputation. Aristotle mentions in his *Historia Animalium* a story of a fierce creature called the *martichoras*, but adds prudently: *at least, if we should believe Ctesias* (εἰ δεῖ πιστεῦσαι Κτησίᾳ).⁴³ Lucian mentions him in the introduction of his *True Stories* as an extreme specimen of the mendacious writers he will be parodying. A parody is only funny when you can indeed recognise the allusions, in this case to Ctesian fabrication. And we may assume that Philostratus' sophisticated reader did as well.⁴⁴

The stories that Apollonius and Iarchas reject are indeed inventions of Ctesias, namely the story about the wondrous cup, as well as the *martichoras* story, mentioned with caution by Aristotle. Iarchas disparages these stories as mere *mythologoumena*. Things become however a bit muddled when we note that the existence of unicorns is endorsed by Apollonius' alleged autopsy. And Iarchas goes on to tell Apollonius

⁴¹ In fact, the narrator's warning comes close to Strabo's explanation for including information on snakes taken from Onesicritus, a source he has just before accused for being a lover of *paradoxa*: λέγει δ' οὖν τινα καὶ πιθανὰ καὶ μνήμης ἄξια ὥστε καὶ ἀπιστοῦντα μὴ παρελθεῖν αὐτά ("however he tells some things that are both plausible and worthy of mention, and therefore they are not passed by in silence even by one who disbelieves them." Geog. 15.1.28).

⁴² H. Rommel 1923.

⁴³ *Historia Animalium* 501a25, similar rejections of Ctesias as a liar at 523a26 and 606a8.

⁴⁴ See also T. Whitmarsh 2004:434, "*informed readers* [sc. who recognise the stories in III 1 as coming from "the pages of the notoriously untrustworthy Ctesias"] may be predisposed to distrust <them>."

about griffins and the mysterious Pantarbe stone, granting him the favour of *autopsia* by showing it to Apollonius. These stories, however, are Ctesian fabrications *too*. The same goes for the story of the paw fish and the inflammable oil of the oil worm, mentioned this time by the primary narrator. Are we to suspend our disbelief, to believe or to smile about the canniness of our sophisticated author?⁴⁵

A similar explicit reluctance to insert *mythologoumena* in prose is also found in the first book of Strabo's *Geography* (1.2.35). To defend the poets from Apollodorus' critique that it is out of ignorance (ἄγνοια) that they wrote things that are not to true, Strabo argues that we "do not pay attention to prose writers either, when they compose stories on many subjects in the guise of history"⁴⁶ (ἐν ἱστορίας σχήματι), without explicitly acknowledging that they practice *mythographia* (μὴ ἐξομολογῶνται τὴν μυθογραφίαν). Instead, it is obvious that they intentionally are weaving in *mythoi* and come up with impossibilities, not through ignorance of the facts, but through intentional invention (πλάσει) for the sake of pleasure and the thrill of the fearful (τῶν ἀδυνάτων τερατείας καὶ τέρψεως χάριν). They however *pretend* to be doing this out of ignorance, as a device to appear more convincing (δοκοῦσι δὲ κατ' ἄγνοιαν, ὅτι μάλιστα καὶ πιθανῶς τὰ τοιαῦτα μυθεύουσι). Therefore Theopompus is a better historian, in that he acknowledges (ἐξομολογεῖται) that he will include *mythoi* in his historical reports, as opposed to Herodotus, Ctesias, Hellanicus and the other writers of 'Indian tales' (οἱ τὰ Ἰνδικὰ συγγράψαντες).

The narrator of the VA performs an authenticating scepticism similar to Strabo's stance, yet in combination with a complex form of *pretended* ignorance (ἄγνοιαν). He is characterised as someone who, unlike readers of Lucian and probably also his own readers, does not recognise Ctesian *thaumata* and (however cautiously) believes Ctesian wonders when authorised by his protagonists. That is why Philostratus, unlike

⁴⁵ J.S. Romm (1992:118–119) suggests that the criteria on which *mirabilia* were rejected or inserted reflect "Philostratus' interest in the Indian episodes as metaphors", which brings the VA's third book "closer to allegory than to ethnography. [...] The wonders which Philostratus chooses to discuss in this final episode do indeed seem to transcend the simple issue of belief. Merely monstrous creatures like the martichora and shadow-footed Skiapodes are quickly dismissed from the discussion, while sacred birds, like the griffin—here divinized as the animal which pulls the chariot of the Sun—and the phoenix, are described in greater detail". See also J. Elsner 1997.

⁴⁶ Transl. H.L. Jones.

Strabo, Aristotle and others,⁴⁷ never mentions the name of his *real* source. For similar reasons Philostratus never mentions Herodotus in the undeniably Herodotean first book of the *VA*.

The narrator ends his catalogue of Indian wonders with a story about a wondrous pearl. He introduces this story with the remark that even Apollonius did not regard it as puerile (μειρακιώδης), but that it is a pretty invention (πλάττεται) and extremely remarkable.

Ἀξιὸν δὲ μὴδὲ τὸν περὶ τῆς ἐτέρας μαργαρίτιδος παρελθεῖν λόγον, ἐπεὶ μὴδὲ Ἀπολλωνίῳ μειρακιώδης ἔδοξεν, ἀλλὰ πλάττεται ἥδιστος καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ θαλαττοურγίᾳ θαυμασιώτατος.

It would not be right to omit the account of another kind of pearl, since even Apollonius did not think the story puerile, and it is a very charming tale and involves the most amazing kind of fishing (III 57).

Philostratus uses the verb *plattein* here ambiguously: the noun *plasma* is one of the concepts in ancient literary theory that come quite close to our notion of fiction, often, as in this passage, in relation with its effect, pleasure (ἡδονή, τέρψις).⁴⁸ This collocation might implicitly strengthen

⁴⁷ Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* 9.21.4.1.

⁴⁸ Compare Philostratus' use of the term *poikilia* / *poikilos* in *VA* I 4, cf. p. 97 and p. 107 n. 33. Another example of Philostratus' ambiguous use of terms from ancient literary theory can be found in the *Heroicus*: the term *ψυχαγωγία* is used to describe how Homer conjured up the spirit of his alleged source Odysseus: ἐς Ἰθάκην γάρ ποτε τὸν Ὀμηρον πλεῦσαι φασιν ἀκούσαντα, ὡς πέπνυται ἔτι ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ Ὀδυσσέως καὶ ψυχαγωγία ἐπ' αὐτὸν χρήσασθαι, ("For they say that Homer once sailed to Ithaca because he heard that the ghost of Odysseus still breathed, and they say that Homer summoned him from the dead", *Her.* 43). Earlier in the text the vinetender reports Prote-silaus' criticism of Homer's *mythoi* in the *Odyssey* as fictions aiming at *ψυχαγωγία*, now using the term in its more common literary meaning. Once more *hedone* and 'fiction' seem to go together: τὰ γὰρ Πολυφήμου καὶ Ἀντιφάτου καὶ Σκύλλης καὶ τὰ ἐν Αἴδου καὶ ὅποσα αἱ Σειρήνες ἡδον, οὐδὲ ἀκούειν ξυγχωρεῖ ὁ Πρωτεσίλεως, ἀλλ' ἐπαλείφειν ἡμᾶς κηρὸν τοῖς ὥσὶ καὶ παραιτεῖσθαι αὐτὰ οὐχ ὡς οὐ πλέα ἡδονῆς καὶ ψυχαγωγῆσαι ἱκανά, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀπίθανά τε καὶ παρευρημένα, καὶ τὴν νῆσον δὲ τὴν Ὠρυγίαν καὶ τὴν Αἰαίαν καὶ ὡς ἦρων αὐτοῦ αἱ θεαί, παραπλεῖν κελεύει καὶ μὴ προσορμίζεσθαι τοῖς μύθοις ("Protesilaus does not even allow us to listen to the stories about Polyphemos, Antiphates, Scylla, the events in Hades, and what the Sirens sang, but he permits us to smear over our ears with beeswax and to avoid these stories, not because they are not full of pleasure and able to allure us, but because they are untrustworthy and fabricated. He bids us to sail past the islands of Ogygia and Aiaia and the stories of how the goddesses made love to him, and not to cast our anchor among fables", *Her.* 34). For the history and shifting significances of '*psuchagogia*' (sometimes translated as "entertainment") hovering between magic and the intoxicating effect of poetry, often tied up with each other in ancient theories of fiction, see R. Meijering 1987:6–12. For a similar ambiguity of the word *χρώματα* (representing also the 'colours' of rhetoric) in the *Imagines* see the remark in passing by J. Elsner 2004:173.

the reader's awareness that Philostratus is negotiating a license to fictionalise, authorised by Apollonius and Iarchas.

In the third book of the *VA* the sophisticated reader can see a sophist at work who excels in the art of persuasion. His communicative aim is to convince his reader that his story is true by creating an illusion of non-fictionality. Yet at the same time, the mechanisms of belief-creating are foregrounded through textual features which reveal the distinction between author and narrator, the latter of which is represented as being ignorant (cf. Strabo's *agnoia*) about the literary trickiness of the first. The (sophisticated) ancient reader is therefore simultaneously being drawn into the fiction and placed at a distance from the text as literary artefact, perhaps enjoying the irony of protagonists mirroring the narrator's and, unavoidably, the reader's concern about what (not) to (dis-)believe.⁴⁹

Foregrounding of Intertextual Play in the VA

The intertextual opulence of the *Vita Apollonii* is impressive: both overtly and covertly we find a myriad of literary allusions throughout the work. Apollonius is not only explicitly characterised by the narrator as a superlative of all the icons of Greek culture, this characterisation is also strengthened by implicit allusions to Alexander, Heracles, Dionysus, Proteus, Pythagoras, Socrates and others, all of which Apollonius is shown to surpass or at least equal.⁵⁰ This intertextual display not only adds meaning to the text, by placing Apollonius into the rich literary tradition, it also has an alienating function. Just like explicit narratorial guidelines, intertextuality makes the reader sharply aware of the literariness of the story, of the fact that the plot and its narration are artfully contrived, alluding to other traditional story patterns.

⁴⁹ In Philostratus' *Heroicus* belief is equally important and ambiguous. The first half of the dialogue is occupied by the Phoenician's gradual move from strong scepticism (e.g. ἀπιστώ, *Her.* 2) and dismissal of the stories about Protesilaus, to belief, induced by the vinetender's complex *Beglaubigungsapparat*. Once the Phoenician is convinced it will, ironically, be the vinetender's source (Damis' role is here taken up by the hero Protesilaus) who performs the scepticism, this time directed against Homer. See J.K. B. Maclean 2004.

⁵⁰ Apollonius is often represented as being fully aware of the intertextual connotations of his sayings or deeds, consciously re-enacting prestigious story patterns. At other moments in the story however, both Apollonius and the narrator do not explicitly comment on Apollonius' allusive behaviour; Philostratus leaves it to the reader to spot and interpret the parallels between Apollonius and for example Dionysus or Socrates.

The narrator is not the only 'allusionist', his characters are constantly referring to Greek literature as well, even the clumsily writing Assyrian Damis.⁵¹ Sometimes intertextual motifs brought up by the narrator are repeated later on by the protagonists or vice versa. Again we note a convergence between frame and main story, between, in this case, primary narrator and secondary narrators or protagonists.

In the fourth book, where our hero is about to engage in a nocturnal conversation with Achilles, the dynamics between frame and main story are most striking.

Apollonius is trying to reassure his comrades with a speech wherein he casts himself successively as a new Nestor, Phoenix, Priam and Odysseus, visiting Achilles (IV 11). If things after all turn out badly, he will join the company of Memnon, Cycnus and Hector, notorious victims of Achilles. Apollonius is clear about it: he knows Achilles, and indeed he does, as he reports himself to Damis four chapters later. The narrator comments that Apollonius is speaking here ἀναμιξ παίζας τε καὶ σπουδάσας, mixing the earnest with the jest.

τοιαῦτα πρὸς τοὺς ἐταίρους ἀναμιξ παίζας τε καὶ σπουδάσας προσέβαινε τῷ κολωνῷ μόνος, οἱ δὲ ἐβάρδιζον ἐπὶ τὴν ναὺν ἑσπέρας ἥδη.

All this he said to his companions in a mix of jest and earnest, and then approached the mound alone, while they went to the ship, since it was now evening (IV 11).

Apollonius is piling up Homeric allusions interweaving his speech with Homeric tags. He casts himself first aptly in the role of the Homeric older men Nestor, Phoenix and Priam, and then, increasingly incongruously, as the young and famously beautiful Memnon and Cycnus, with Hector as top of the bill. Intertextuality is central to Apollonius' joke, although the humour derives not only from the density of allusions but also from their incongruity.⁵²

The whole episode is focalised through the eyes of Apollonius' followers. Together with them we see our hero disappear in the night on his way to Achilles' tomb. We subsequently hear about the expulsion of a Trojan youth from the company of Apollonius (IV 12), after which they sail to Methymna where Apollonius restores the tomb of Palamedes.

⁵¹ As for example in VA VII 22, when after Apollonius has told him about Aelianus' support, Damis says he finally believes (οὐκ ἀπιστῶ) the story about Leucothea who helped the drowning Odysseus.

⁵² T. Schirren 2005:304: "diese Bemerkung, in der Witz und Ernst gemischt seien, erweist sich so als programmatisch für die gesamte Episode."

This Hellenic cultural hero is another favourite character of Philostratus: the *Heroicus* is partly a rehabilitation of the legendary inventor of the alphabet and therefore a good candidate for patron saint of the sophists. Apollonius eloquently bids him to forget his wrath towards the Achaeans. In this scene Philostratus seems to be transposing the wrath of Achilles onto Palamedes, and Apollonius is cast, again, in the role of the famous members of the Iliadic embassy (*Il.* 9.182–657).

οἱ μὲν δὴ ἐξεπήδων τῆς νεώς, ὁ δὲ ἐνέτυχε τῷ τάφῳ καὶ τὸ ἄγαλμα κατορωρυγμένον πρὸς αὐτῷ εὗρεν. ἐπεγέγραπτο δὲ τῇ βάσει τοῦ ἀγάλματος ΘΕΙΩΙ ΠΑΛΑΜΗΔΕΙ. καθιδρύσας οὖν αὐτό, ὡς κάγῳ εἶδον, καὶ ἱερὸν περὶ αὐτὸ βαλόμενος, ὅσον οἱ τὴν Ἐνοδίαν τιμῶντες, ἔστι γὰρ ὡς δέκα ξυμπότας ἐν αὐτῷ εὐωχεῖσθαι, τοιάνδε εὐχὴν ᾠξάτο· “Παλάμηδες, ἐκλάθου τῆς μήνιδος, ἣν ἐν τοῖς Ἀχαιοῖς ποτε ἐμήνισας, καὶ δίδου γίνεσθαι πολλοὺς τε καὶ σοφοὺς ἄνδρας. ναὶ Παλάμηδες, δι’ ὃν λόγοι, δι’ ὃν Μοῦσαι, δι’ ὃν ἐγώ.

The others jumped out of the ship, while he sought out the tomb and found the statue buried beside it. On the base of the statue was written ‘To the divine Palamedes’. He reerected it, as I myself have seen, and marked out a sanctuary around it of the size that devotees of Enodia use, since it has room for about ten drinking companions to celebrate. Then he made this prayer: ‘Palamedes, forget the wrath which once you felt towards the Achaeans, and grant that they may have many true philosophers. Yes, by Palamedes, the source of language, of the Muses, of myself.’ (IV 15)

There is an undeniable irony at work here. In VA IV 11 Apollonius compares himself wittily with some of the members of the Iliadic embassy. Now he is implicitly and unconsciously enacting his own joke by performing a soothing speech in front of the rancorous hero, Palamedes.⁵³ The repetition by the author of an intertextual motif brought up by his main character can, again, be read as a metafictional hint at Philostratus’ own intertextual sophistication. But despite the playful allusiveness of the passage, the narrator wants his reader to believe his story: he has seen the restored statue of Palamedes *with his own eyes*.

We can wonder whether this *autopsia* is indeed inserted to induce belief, or, quite on the contrary, to strengthen the humorous atmosphere of the episode, where the fictional world and the Homeric world, where literary jest and earnestness seem to blend smoothly.

⁵³ There might even be an ironic incongruence at work in the implicit comparison: Apollonius is cast as Odysseus, but aiming at the impossible, as he is soothing the wrath of his arch-enemy Palamedes.

How should we interpret this metafictional mirror effect then? Is Philostratus implicitly commenting on his own allusive literary practice? Is he exploring the possibility of seriousness within a playful literary framework?

In this episode we encounter many themes that are touched upon throughout the whole *Vita Apollonii*. As in the *Heroicus*, the past permeates the present. Philostratus demonstrates not only the immortality of Apollonius, but that of the literary tradition as well. Metempsychosis functions here not only as an attribute of Pythagoreanism, but also as a device that makes it possible for the legendary past to live on for ever. One need only think about Apollonius' encounter with the soul of Amasis, embodied in a vegetarian lion, the rabid boy that is in fact Telamon, or the reincarnation of Palamedes living among the Brahmins.⁵⁴ In the case of Achilles it is not metempsychosis that does the trick, but the apparition of a ghost. Yet their function in the story is similar. Is Philostratus, then, signalling in the Achilles passage that we are supposed to read these metempsychosis episodes as balancing play and seriousness as well?⁵⁵

Whatever the case, we can safely conclude that Philostratus is foregrounding his literary art strongly here, not only through the intertextual play, but also by the unusual narration of the whole episode. It seems as if Philostratus wanted to avoid a direct representation of the story. By postponing the narration of Apollonius' conversation with Achilles, making it into a first person narration, Philostratus both builds up suspense and delegates the responsibility for the wondrous tale to his protagonist. One wonders why Philostratus should do this. Is he again soliciting a license for fiction here, both by signalling the osmosis between the world of the story and the world of literature, and by distancing his narrating alter-ego from his invention?

⁵⁴ Amasis: VA V 42; Telamon: VI 43; Palamedes: III 22.

⁵⁵ See also T. Schirren (2005:270), although he is in our opinion sometimes over-enthusiastic in finding irony markers: "durch das Philosophem der Metempsychose [werden] intertextuelle Bezüge möglich, die ihrerseits aber nicht ohne komische Absichten eingesetzt sind."

A Satyr Play in the VA

After half a book of philosophical discussions between Apollonius and Thespesion and the visit to the cataracts, Philostratus strikes a somewhat lighter tone and inserts, so to speak, a satyr play: during their evening dinner, Apollonius and his companions again mix the earnest with the jest.

Καταλύσαντες δὲ μετὰ τοὺς καταρράκτας ἐν κώμῃ τῆς Αἰθιοπίας οὐ μεγάλη ἐδείπνουν μὲν περὶ ἐσπέραν ἐγκαταμιγνύντες σπουδὴν παιδιᾶ.

After the Cataracts, they stopped in a rather small Ethiopian village, and were having their evening dinner, mixing light and serious topics (VI 27).

Suddenly they hear the women of the nearby village screaming: the village appears to be haunted by a libidinous satyr. Apollonius, however, knows the solution: he tells the story of Midas, who heard from his mother a way to capture satyrs by mixing wine in their drinking water.⁵⁶ Apollonius proves the story to be true (μὴ ψεύδεται ὁ λόγος): the satyr drinks from the trough and falls asleep in the cave of the nymphs. The narrator's comment fits the tone of the scene: the reader should regard this episode not as a "ὁδοῦ πάρεργον, ἀλλὰ παρόδου ἔργον" ("not a sideshow of his trip, but a show on his side trip").

The narrator continues with the injunction to the reader to remember the satyr story when he encounters a letter of Apollonius in which he mentions his Ethiopian adventure (μεμνήσθαι χρή, as in I 4). The narrator implicates himself in the authentication of the story with an autobiographical note proving that satyrs do have erotic tendencies. The whole scene ends with an ostensible appeal for belief.

σατύρους δὲ εἶναί τε καὶ ἐρωτικῶν ἄπτεσθαι μὴ ἀπιστῶμεν· οἶδα γὰρ κατὰ τὴν Λῆμον τῶν ἐμαντοῦ τινα ἰσηλίκων, οὗ τῇ μητρὶ ἐλέγετο τις ἐπιφοιτᾶν σάτυρος, ὥς εἰκὸς ἦν τῇ ἱστορίᾳ ταύτῃ, νεβρίδα γὰρ ξυμφυᾶ ἐώκει ἐνημμένῳ κατὰ τὸν νῶτον, ἧς οἱ ποδεῶνες οἱ πρότοι ξυνειληφότες

⁵⁶ The story is mentioned in Xenophon's *Anabasis* 1, 2, 13: λέγεται Μίδας τὸν Σάτυρον θηρεῦσαι οἶνῳ κεράσας αὐτήν ("Midas, according to the story, caught the satyr by mixing wine with the water of the spring" transl. C.L. Brownson). Philostratus tells the (traditional version of the) Midas story also in the form of an *ekphrasis* in the *Imagines* I 21, in his introduction typically blending the world of the painting and the world of the spectators: "The Satyr is asleep; let us speak of him with bated breath, lest he wake and spoil the scene before us. Midas has captured him with wine in Phrygia [...]" (transl. A. Fairbanks).

τὴν δέρην περὶ τὸ στέρνον αὐτῷ ἀφήπτοντο. ἀλλὰ μὴ πλείω ὑπὲρ τούτων, οὔτε γὰρ ἡ πεῖρα ἀπιστητέα οὔτε ἐγώ.

That satyrs exist and have erotic tendencies is not to be disbelieved. I know of a contemporary of mine in Lemnos whose mother was said to be haunted by a satyr, or so the present story suggests. He appeared to wear a close-fitting fawnskin down his back, with the forefeet drawn around his neck and tied over his chest. No more of all this, however, because neither experience nor I myself should meet with disbelief (VI 27).

The whole satyr episode is teasingly ambiguous. It suggests an overall comic atmosphere, not only by the introductory phrase, but also by Apollonius' re-enactment of the Midas story. Apollonius' unorthodox version of the legend moreover suggests that Midas' mother has a certain expertise in the field of satyrs, as is shown by Midas' satyr-like ears (μετεῖχε μὲν γὰρ τοῦ τῶν σατύρων γένους ὁ Μίδας οὗτος, ὡς ἐδήλου τὰ ὦτα), whereas in the traditional version Apollo punished Midas giving him ass-ears.

The narrator's authentication is ambiguous too: it is not the story which is authenticated, but only the libidinous nature of satyrs.⁵⁷ Just as Apollonius proved that Midas' story was not a lie, the narrator indirectly endorses Damis' story, with a *historia* that mirrors Apollonius' twist of the traditional story by making of Midas a half-breed satyr.⁵⁸

Once again, the textual playfulness seems to collide with the straight-faced historiographical pose of the narrator, suggesting a Philostratean tongue in cheek.

Apollonius' ἔπαινος μύθων: a Myth on Myths (V 14–18)

The fifth book of the *VA* contains a lengthy platonic discussion on the relationship between two different kinds of myths and their respective

⁵⁷ This strategy of indirect authentication is frequently deployed in the *VA*, for example in IV 15, the Palamedes episode discussed above. Philostratus stresses that he has seen the statue of Palamedes with his own eyes (he mentions the statue also in the *Heroicus*, 33), which however does not authenticate the fact that it was Apollonius who restored it, let alone in the manner as he has just told. Compare also with *VS* I 515 where the *thauma* of the young Scopelianus miraculously surviving a bolt of lightning is put in relief by an anecdote Philostratus knows to have happened in Lemnos, after which follows the story about a *tableau vivant* of labouring peasants turned into a horrid *nature morte* by a single stroke of lightning.

⁵⁸ On this passage, see also T. Schirren 2005:222–226.

truth claims, culminating in a fascinating aetiological fable on fables.⁵⁹ In their trip from west to east Apollonius and his companions stop in Catana, where they hear many marvellous stories about Mount Etna. Our learned company however comes up with much more convincing explanations (αὐτοὶ δ' ἐς πιθανωτέρους ἀφικέσθαι λόγους, V 14). These are however postponed for a couple of chapters, since Apollonius first opens an in depth discussion of *mythologia* in the form of a Socratic dialogue: “ἔστι τι μυθολογία;” “νὴ Δί”, εἶπεν ὁ Μένιππος “ἦν γε οἱ ποιηταὶ ἐπαινοῦσι” (“Is there such a thing as storytelling?” “Yes indeed”, said Menippus, “at least the kind that the poets favor.”)⁶⁰ Subsequently, Apollonius asks which kind of stories are more philosophical, the myths of the poets, or the Aesopic myths. Menippus disparages the latter as λῆροι γραυσὶν [...] καὶ παιδίους (“nonsense for old women and children”). He prefers the poetic myths “because they are recited as if they were fact” (ὥς γεγονότες ᾗδονται).⁶¹

Apollonius' question in combination with Menippus' answer may remind us of the discussion in Aristotle's *Poetics*, where Aristotle compares history and poetry, judging the latter φιλοσοφώτερον, more philosophical, because it does not recount factual events, but οἷα ἂν γένοιτο, plausible events.⁶²

In an obvious Platonic vein Apollonius disparages the myths of the poets on moral grounds, because they might corrupt their listeners. His main criticism however, is that they present their stories “as if they really did happen” (ὥς γεγονότες ᾗδονται) and leave “a healthy-minded reader cudgelling his brains to know whether it really happened” (transl. F.C. Conybeare): the very Aristotelian quality Menippus had praised is in Apollonius' eyes a flaw.

⁵⁹ Ironically, in the opening of book five the narrator, commenting once again on his selection criteria, explicitly leaves out the mythological stories on the West (as opposed to the inclusion of *ta mythologoumena* in book three) τὰ μὲν μυθώδη ἐῶ, τὰ δ' ἀκοῆς τε καὶ λόγου ἄξια δηλώσω μᾶλλον.

⁶⁰ Compare for example Plato, *Hippias Maior* 287c: Socr: Οὐκοῦν ἔστι τι τοῦτο, ἡ δικαιοσύνη; Hippias: Πάνυ γε.

⁶¹ In the *Heroicus* the Phoenician disparages precisely the poetic myths as “children's stories”: παῖς μὲν γὰρ ὢν ἔτι ἐπίστευον τοῖς τοιούτοις, καὶ κατεμυθολόγει με ἡ τίτθη χαριέντως αὐτὰ ἐπᾶδουσα καὶ τι καὶ κλαίουσα ἐπ' ἐνίοις αὐτῶν, μειράκιον δὲ γενόμενος οὐκ ἀβασανίστως ᾗθηται χρῆναι προσδέχεσθαι ταῦτα (*Her.* 7).

⁶² Aristotle, *Poetica* 1451b.

Apollonius prefers the *mythoi* of Aesop, which are overtly fictitious and hence more honest. Moreover, they always end with a concise moral lesson.

εἶτα τοῦ φιλαλήθους μᾶλλον ἢ οἱ ποιηταὶ ἤψατο· οἱ μὲν γὰρ βιάζονται πιθανοὺς φαίνεσθαι τοὺς ἑαυτῶν λόγους, ὁ δ' ἐπαγγέλλων λόγον, ὅς ἐστι ψευδής, πᾶς οἶδεν, ὅτι αὐτὸ τὸ μὴ περὶ ἀληθινῶν ἐρεῖν ἀληθεύει. καὶ ὁ μὲν ποιητὴς εἰπὼν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λόγον καταλείπει τῷ ὑγιαίνοντι ἀκροατῇ βασανίζειν αὐτόν, εἰ ἐγένετο, ὁ δὲ εἰπὼν μὲν ψευδῆ λόγον, ἐπαγαγὼν δὲ νουθεσίαν, ὥσπερ ὁ Αἴσωπος, δείκνυσιν ὡς ἐς τὸ χρήσιμον τῆς ἀκροάσεως τῷ ψεύδει κέχρηται.

He [sc. Aesop] also was more devoted to truth than the poets. They give their own stories a forced appearance of plausibility, while he, by promising a story that everyone knows to be untrue, tells the truth precisely in not undertaking to tell the truth. A poet when he tells his own story leaves it to the honest reader to test whether it really happened, but someone who tells an untrue tale while adding instruction, as Aesop does, makes plain that he uses falsehood for the benefit of the listener (V 14).

It is interesting to compare Apollonius' words with the well-known definition of the fable in the *progymnasmata*, see for instance the version of Aelius Theon, who connects the *mythos* as exercise firmly with the Aesopic fable.

Μῦθος ἐστὶ λόγος ψευδὴς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν, [...] οἷς μετὰ τὴν ἔκθεσιν ἐπιλέγομεν τὸν λόγον, ὅτου εἰκὼν ἐστίν. [...]

A “*mythos*” is a fictitious story giving an image of the truth... in which we add the meaning of which it is an image (Progymn. 4, transl. G.A. Kennedy).

The scholion to this passage is also relevant: the story is ‘lying’ but the lie is made explicit (ὁμολογουμένως).

Σ “λόγος” μὲν οὖν “ψευδὴς” πρόσκειται, ἐπειδὴ ὁμολογουμένως ἐκ ψευδοῦς σύγκειται.⁶³

This acknowledgment of lying comes close to our notion of ‘fictional pact’ or ‘contract of fictional complicity’, and at the same time reminds us of Strabo’s criticism of historians who include ‘myths’ without acknowledging it.

Apollonius moreover seems to be rewriting the famous Socratic paradox, in saying that Aesop is at least more truthful than the poets,

⁶³ Scholion II (ad 72.28 = 5.1–6.4 S Rabe). The scholion is taken from M. Patillon 1997:113.

in that he does not pretend to be telling the truth but makes his lies obvious, functional *and* pleasant. An amateur of ancient metafiction might call to mind the famous metafictional programme of Lucian in his already mentioned introduction of the *True Stories*.⁶⁴

κἄν ἐν γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο ἀληθεύσω λέγων ὅτι ψεύδομαι.

for though I tell the truth in nothing else, I shall at least be truthful in saying that I am a liar (VH 1.4, transl. Macleod).

The reader finds himself confronted with characters who theorise about literature, in a Platonic dialogue ending with what appears to be an imitation of the myths told by Socrates. These meta-literary statements, invented by the author, uttered by the protagonist, allegedly reported by the Damis-source and included by the editor, have once again an ambiguous effect. The dialogue reinforces the impression of trustworthiness, since the average liar would never, while lying, expand a theory on lying. Then again, the reader knows that Philostratus is not an average liar, but rather a prolific counterfeiter of reality.

Apollonius however does not confine himself to theory. He puts his theory into practice in a myth about the origin of mythology, in short, Apollonius performs a 'meta-myth'!⁶⁵

ἐμὲ δέ, ὦ Μένιππε, καὶ μῦθον περὶ τῆς Αἰσώπου σοφίας ἐδιδάξατο ἡ μήτηρ κομιδῇ νήπιον.

My own mother, Menippus, taught me a tale about Aesop's wisdom, when I was very young (V 15).

One can hardly deny the sophistication of this episode: Apollonius tells a *mythos* on the origin of *mythoi*, featuring Aesop himself, whom Apollonius entangles here in the genre of which he is the *archègetès*.⁶⁶ Moreover, Apollonius' *mythos*, which he heard from his mother, is mirrored by a *mythos* within the *mythos*, told to Hermes by *his* 'mother figures', the Horae. Ironically, this Ur-*mythos*, about a cow reflecting on

⁶⁴ See A. Georgiadou and D.H.J. Larmour 1998:1, "This statement is reminiscent of Socrates' famous remark [...] and in fact, the whole Introduction echoes the remarks made by Socrates at the beginning of the Apology."

⁶⁵ See G.-J. Van Dijk 1995:251, "it could be termed an autoreflective fable."

⁶⁶ Aesopic fables featuring Aesop himself are rather rare, see for example Αἴσωπος ἐν ναπηγίῳ (n°19 Chambry), or two of the four fables in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (1399–1405), but he always appears as a *logopoios* telling a myth within the myth. See G.-J. Van Dijk 1997:101, and M. Patillon 1997:LI. Of course Aesop features as protagonist in the stories which culminated in the several *Vitae Aesopi*.

itself and the world, remains untold. The moral function of *mythoi*, on the basis of which Apollonius prefers the Aesopic over the poetic myth, is inverted in Apollonius' own meta-myth: the cow-fable of the Horae inspires Hermes to steal the cattle of Apollo. Apollonius' myth itself does not contain a moral message at the ending either. Instead, Apollonius ends his *mythos* precisely with the Euripidean *passe partout* ending.

αἱ μὲν δὴ πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῆς τέχνης ἐνθένδε ἀφίκοντο τῷ Αἰσώπῳ, καὶ τοῖόνδε ἀπέβη τὸ τῆς μυθολογίας πρᾶγμα.

And so the 'many shapes' of Aesop's art came to him in this way, and 'thus ended the tale' of storytelling (V 15).

Ironically, this is an expanded allusion to the very Euripidean tag he criticises in the preceding dialogue:

καὶ ὁ μὲν ποιητὴς εἰπὼν “πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων” ἢ τοιοῦτό τι ἐπιχορεύσας ἀπῆλθεν, ὁ δὲ Αἰσώπος ἐπιχρησμοδῆσας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λόγον.⁶⁷

A poet says 'Many the shapes that heaven-sent things assume' or some other tag and off he goes, but Aesop concludes with his own moral (V 14).

This incongruous repetition and amplification of verses may serve the characterisation of Apollonius as a connoisseur of Greek tragedy and a keen player with *paideia*, much along the lines of his speech in IV 11 “ἀναμιῖξ παίζας τε καὶ σπουδάσας”, *mixing the earnest and the jest*. At the same time, this literary play can be attributed to the author, out-smarting his protagonist and making the reader his accomplice.

At this point, Apollonius interrupts himself:

ἴσως δ' ἀνόητον ἔπαθον· ἐπιστρέψαι γὰρ ὑμᾶς διανοηθεῖς ἐς λόγους φουσιχωτέρους τε καὶ ἀληθεστέρους ὧν οἱ πολλοὶ περὶ τῆς Αἵτνης ἄδουσιν, αὐτὸς ἐς ἔπαινον μύθων ἀπηνέχθην, οὐ μὲν ἄχαρις ἡ ἐκβολὴ τοῦ λόγου γέγονεν·

But perhaps something silly has happened to me. I meant to lead you towards more scientific and true explanations than most people's cant

⁶⁷ Compare among others Euripides' *Alcestis* 1159–1163: πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων, / πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί· / καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη, / τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἦρε θεός. / τοῖόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα. Lucian parodies this well known ending twice, an expanded version at the ending of his mock-tragedy *Podagra* (324–330), and, slightly abridged, at the end of his *Symposium* (43). A second and third century reader must have easily spotted this tag.

about Etna, but got carried away myself into praising fables. Still, the digression from our discourse has not been devoid of charm (V 16).

This is a self-confident compliment not only for the character, Apollonius, but also for the narrator whose task it was to rewrite Damis' simple story, for Apollonius' *mythos* is perhaps playful, but by no means silly.⁶⁸

Philostratus adds a little extra at the end of the episode: after his ἔπαινος μύθων ("eulogy of myths" Conybeare), Apollonius moves over to λόγους φυσικωτέρους τε καὶ ἀληθεστέρους ("more scientific and accurate beliefs" V 16) about volcanoes. First he rejects the stories about the giants Typho and Enceladus assaulting Olympus, adding that "this is madness (μανία) to relate and madness to believe" (Conybeare). After Apollonius' scientific explanation which indeed comes very close to the truth, Apollonius allows that the place of the Pious Ones, "around whom the fire flowed" exists there too (λεγέσθω μὲν κἀνταῦθά τις),⁶⁹ although "we should believe that every place is safe for those who act righteously, and the sea is propitious for them not only when they sail, but even when they try to swim." The narrator closes the episode with the following comment on Apollonius' rhetorical practice:

αὐτὸν γὰρ τοὺς λόγους ἀνέπαυεν ἐς τὰ χρηστὰ τῶν παραγγελμάτων.

For he always ended his discourses with words of useful advice (V 17).

⁶⁸ The frequent apologies for a digression (ἐκβολὴ τοῦ λόγου), for example in Thucydides (e.g. I, 97.2), both signal the writer's concern to stick to the subject (*hypothesis*), and the importance of digressions as a means to entertain his audience, a feature that is central to the VA especially in the second book which consists largely of encyclopaedic *ekbolai*. Apollonius/Philostratus makes this explicit: οὐ μὴν ἄχαρις ἡ ἐκβολὴ τοῦ λόγου γέγονεν. In the *Heroicus* the Phoenician merchant indulges in the vinetender's stories on mythical subjects: Vinetender: Ἀλλὰ τὰς ἐκβολὰς τῶν λόγων ἀδολεσχίας ἔνιοι, ξένε, ἡγοῦνται καὶ λῆρον πρὸς τοὺς μὴ σχολὴν ἄγοντας. [...] Phoenician: [...] τὰς δὲ ἐκβολὰς τῶν λόγων μὴ λῆρον, ἀλλ' ἐπικέρδειαν ἡγώμεθα τῆς ἐμπορίας ταύτης (V: "But some people, my guest, consider these digressions to be idle talk and nonsense for those not at leisure [...].") Ph: "Let's consider these digressions not as nonsense, but as profit", *Heroicus* 53, 2–3).

⁶⁹ The *campus piorum* between Catana and Syracuse, where according to Pausanias (10, 28) two brothers, Anapis and Amphinomus, saved their parents from a volcanic eruption, without themselves being hurt since the fire miraculously stayed away from them. Ironically, Ctesias also tells this story (FGrH 3c, 688, F.45). The same story seems to be underlying Telesinus' dream in VIII 12, in which "a wave of fire swept the earth" killing everybody but Apollonius, since the wave parted for Apollonius to swim through it.

This seems to echo Apollonius' own praise of the Aesopic fable, in that it provides a useful moral at the end (ἐς τὸ χρήσιμον τῆς ἀκροάσεως), although Apollonius' useful moral comes not at the end of his myth, but of his scientific explanation.⁷⁰

Apollonius will similarly end the narrator's account of his life with a moral on the immortality of the soul, rhapsodised in a dream to the nameless sceptical disciple: as a result, the disciple shouts, like a madman (ὥσπερ ἐμμανές), "I believe you" (πείθομαί σοι, VIII 31).⁷¹

Conclusion: Fiction and Metafiction

Inferring from the story about the sceptical disciple that belief in the VA requires a certain degree of μανία, or to put it bluntly, that one should be mad to believe the VA, would be a fine example of the interpretive excesses that may result from what Wayne C. Booth called "the pervasive irony hunt", threatening "even the most obviously omniscient and reliable narrators."⁷² The VA's narrator is, although very explicitly not omniscient, perfectly reliable.

When the protagonists of the main story are implicitly commenting on the narration of the frame story, this results in a kind of dramatic irony, arising from the fact that the reader knows more than the characters of the text (including in this case the primary narrator). The metafictional statements uttered by characters inhabiting the diegetic world of the rewritten story, can only be reconciled with the claim of our primary narrator that he is indeed only rewriting an already existing and trustworthy account, if we take this to be literary play for which

⁷⁰ This moral lesson of Apollonius is immediately thereafter confirmed: in the next chapter Apollonius will prove his piety by leaving the Syracusan ship on which they had departed heading for Achaea and changing to another ship that went to Lechaenum. Only the ones "who knew the man" (γινωσκόντων τὸν ἄνδρα) paid attention, and rightly so: "the Syracusan ship sank as it was entering the Crisaean gulf" (V 18).

⁷¹ It is striking that the Phoenician in Philostratus' *Heroicus* ends the dialogue with exactly the same words, after the vinetender's promise to tell more Trojan stories the following day. Ironically, the *Heroicus* ends abruptly after the Phoenician's "Πείθομαί σοι" (*Her.* 58), not unlike the last sentence of Lucian's *Verae Historiae*: τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐξῆς βίβλοις διηγήσομαι ("What happened in the other world I shall tell you in the succeeding books" *VH* 2.47). Translator MacLeod comments in a footnote: "The biggest lie of all, as a disgruntled Greek scribe remarks in the margin."

⁷² W.C. Booth 1961:369.

the *author* should be held responsible, communicating with his reader, as it were, behind the back of both narrators and characters.

This metafictional irony is one of the many strategies that serve to foreground Philostratus' literary skill, and as such it forms an integral part of the literary art of the VA. It also determines, we would argue, the assessment of the work as a whole, opening a horizon of expectations that may allow the reader to successfully interpret and appreciate the VA, *not* as the rewritten version of Damis' scrapbook it is purported to be, but as a sophistic *pièce de résistance*.

Whereas Philostratus has revealed his mastery in the art of authentication and has produced the necessary *vraisemblance* by making his story look as factual as possible, the metafictional irony draws the attention of the reader to the literary factitiousness of his text, at first sight to such an extent that it risks working against the carefully constructed illusion of factuality, and seems to threaten the believability of the story.

However, metafictional irony may serve a higher communicative aim, not so much weakening the believability of the story, but rather ensuring its acceptability *as a fiction*.

By deliberately handling his credibility device in a playful manner, Philostratus is at least telling the truth about the fictionality of his frame-story. Very much like Lucian or Antonius Diogenes, by stressing the literariness of his narration, he subtly flaunts the mechanisms of make-believe. This avowal of a certain degree of fictionality prevents Philostratus from infringing upon the communicative *bienséance*, and the VA from being a forgery or *a lie*.⁷³

Therefore, Philostratus does both what Apollonius condemns about 'the poetical myths', by giving his story "a forced appearance of plausibility", and what he approves of in Aesop, by making it "plain that he uses falsehood for the benefit of the listener" (V 14).⁷⁴ His subtly confessed deceit not only benefits the reader, but might entertain him too, as every

⁷³ J. Tatum (1989:48), discussing the *Cyropaedia*, ironically points an accusing finger towards Xenophon "he is a faker and a cheater, as devious as the characters he creates. He does not say that he is writing fiction." See also L. Hutcheon 1980:49, "the most authentic and honest fiction might well be that which most freely acknowledges its fictionality. Distanced from the text's world in this way, the reader can share, with the author, the pleasure of its imaginative creation."

⁷⁴ Compare with the scholion on Aelius Theon quoted above (p. 121): ὁμολογουμένως ἐκ ψευδοῦς σύγκειται, and with Strabo on myths in historiography (1.2.35, see p. 112), who regards them only permissible if clearly signalled: ἐξομολογῶνται τὴν μυθογραφίαν.

game of make-believe does. As Morgan puts it: "fiction is particularly pleasing if it dances on the edge of the precipice, simultaneously defying and compelling belief."⁷⁵

Philostratus has created an intricate work of art and invested a huge amount of literary skill and technique to erect a literary monument commissioned by the empress in honour of Apollonius, which makes the VA the literary counterpart of the temple in Tyana mentioned in the final chapter of his book.

τάφῳ μὲν οὖν ἢ ψευδοταφίῳ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οὐδαμοῦ προστυχὼν οἶδα καίτοι τῆς γῆς, ὁπόση ἐστίν, ἐπελθὼν πλείστην, λόγοις δὲ πανταχοῦ δαιμονίοις, καὶ ἱερὰ Τύανάδε βασιλείοις ἐκπεποιημένα τέλεσιν· οὐδὲ γὰρ βασιλεῖς ἀπηξίουσιν αὐτὸν ὧν αὐτοὶ ἡξιοῦντο.

As for a tomb or cenotaph [Philostratus however uses the strange *hapax legomenon* ψευδοτάφιον] of the Master, I do not remember ever having met with one anywhere, although I have crossed most of the present world, but I have met with unearthly accounts of him everywhere. There is also a sanctuary to him at Tyana, built at imperial expense, since emperors have not denied to him what has been conferred on themselves" (VIII 31).

The modern reader, however, is left "cudgelling his brains" about the estranging architecture of Philostratus' literary sanctuary, which, viewed from a certain angle, might appear to be an elaborate *pseudotaphion* after all.

⁷⁵ J.R. Morgan 1993:195. He refers to Photius' comment on Antonius Diogenes: Ταῖς δὲ διανοίαις πλείστον ἔχει τοῦ ἡδέος, ἅτε μύθων ἐγγύς καὶ ἀπίστων ἐν πιθανωτάτῃ πλάσει καὶ διασκευῇ ἕλην ἐαυτῇ διηγημάτων ποιουμένη, *Bibl* 166.109a.10–12). Photius' negative reading report of the VA, however (quoted in the introduction to this volume, p. 1), comes close to James Tatum's accusation (see above n. 73), but without the tongue in cheek.

REFORMING THE EYES: INTERPRETERS AND INTERPRETATION IN THE *VITA APOLLONII**

GRAEME MILES

An important part of the human and superhuman ideal presented in the VA is an ideal of interpretation. The idealised figures whom Philostratus represents are invariably acute interpreters. Throughout the VA, interpretation is foregrounded in a variety of ways. Frequently, Apollonius is shown interpreting (or sometimes refusing to reveal his interpretation of) a range of phenomena, including dreams, omens and works of art. The presence of an interpreter within a text is an invitation to readers to consider the nature of interpretation and to observe how interpretation is depicted,¹ and in the VA it is represented with some frequency, often in dialogue form. Furthermore, Apollonius is depicted not simply as an interpreter, but also as an object of interpretation himself. His often oracular speech renders him, like the Delphic oracle to whom he is likened, an interpreter who must himself be decoded. Here Damis is important, in his role as baffled audience, functioning in some respects analogously to the internal audiences in Heliodorus, whom Bartsch has characterised as “proleptic models for the extratextual viewers”.²

Apart from these instances of description and interpretation in the VA, there are several occasions on which Apollonius speaks about theories of interpretation, in particular the interpretation of art, dreams and omens. The sections of the text dealing with art theory were discussed almost a century ago by Ella Birmelin,³ but it will be worthwhile to reconsider these passages for two reasons. Firstly, it is better to treat the theory and practice of interpretation in the text as a whole, since dreams, oracles, omens and art works are interpreted in similar ways and with similar assumptions. Secondly, much research has been done since Birmelin’s thesis on relevant topics.

* My thanks to the editors of this volume and to the anonymous reader for suggestions and observations.

¹ See Bartsch 1989:78, drawing on Schor 1980:165–182.

² Bartsch 1989:120.

³ 1933:149–180 and 392–414.

Finally, having considered these interpretive theories and instances of interpretation, it will be of interest to see how these ideas and examples invite readers to approach the text itself. Richard Hunter has recently argued that the allegorical reading of Heliodorus by 'Philip the Philosopher' follows cues from the *Aethiopica* regarding the interpretation of texts.⁴ Similarly, it ought to be possible on the basis of the material regarding interpretation in the VA to imagine an Apollonian reading of the text itself.

The representation of the hero as interpreter is of central importance to the overall ideal which the VA presents. Skill in interpretation is a characteristic both of the idealised protagonist who is beyond imitation, and is also a quality which is encouraged in, and expected of readers. It is the point at which the two types of ideal in the text meet: the unattainable ideal which is depicted and the attainable ideal which is implied.

Apollonius as Interpreter

In discussing the depiction of Apollonius as an interpreter in the VA, it will be convenient to divide the scenes in which this role is most evident into a number of groups. Firstly, I shall discuss the scenes in which an interpretive dialogue takes place between Apollonius and another character. Secondly, the scenes in which Apollonius refuses to interpret will be considered and the reasons which are given or implied for this refusal. Lastly, I shall examine the sophistic certainty with which Apollonius makes his pronouncements and the use of literature and myth/history as a means of explaining current situations. These divisions are made solely for convenience and the categories will consequently overlap.

The VA contains a number of scenes where interpretation is represented in dialogue form. The first of these occurs not long after Apollonius has been joined by Damis, and shortly before their arrival in Babylon when they come across a slain lioness who is pregnant with eight cubs (I 22). Here, the first interpretation is given by Apollonius: the lioness represents the year which they will spend in Babylon, the cubs the eight further months. The order of interpretation and counter-interpretation in this section is not quite that which is typical later in

⁴ 2004:123–138.

the VA. The more usual pattern is that Damis attempts an interpretation which is then countered by the sage. The order of the dialogue here is similar, however, as Damis questions Apollonius' reading and is in turn corrected.

It is significant that Damis' query is raised on Homeric grounds, drawing an analogy with Calchas' interpretation of the omen of the snakes which devour eight young sparrows and their mother (*Il.* 2.308ff). Apollonius corrects him however (for the first of many times), by drawing some finer distinctions in the analogies involved: only things which have already been born and are thus complete can be likened to years. That which is unborn and in violation of nature (as so many lion-cubs in one litter are taken to be) are quickly destroyed and so are more like months than years.

Several patterns which will recur throughout the VA are established here for the first time. Besides the reliance on ancient authority, and especially Homeric authority, the pattern of two interpretations on similar principles but with different conclusions will characterise many of Apollonius' interpretive dialogues. It is not, however, a pattern which is unique to Philostratus. The same sequence of false and true interpretations can be seen in some Hellenistic poems representing the reading of epitaphs which, as Goldhill observes, "repeatedly dramatise the moment of reading".⁵ Philostratus' narrativisation of interpretation is not an isolated phenomenon but part of an ongoing self-consciousness and interest in interpretation. However, some at least of the epigrams depicting the reading of epitaphs leave their reading tentative, as for instance in the concluding lines of Leonidas (*GP* 22, *AP* 7.422). After giving several possible readings of the same image, sculpted dice, the speaker in the poem concludes: ναί, δοκέω, τῷδε προσηγγίσασμεν. "We have come close", but may still not have reached the 'correct' reading. The interpretive dialogues of the VA, on the other hand, follow a pattern more like that of some other poems of similar type, as for instance by Antipater of Sidon (*GP* 32; *AP* 7.427), where the last interpretation given is treated as the correct one and contrasted with the previous interpretation(s). This is not to suggest that the interpretive dialogues of the VA were directly influenced by poems of this type, rather that both belong to a broader cultural current of interest in interpretation and in particular of dramatising interpretation. Like some at least of these

⁵ Goldhill 1994:200.

interpretive poems too, the dialogues of the VA tend to close down the possibilities of multiple interpretations at their conclusion.

The reasons for Damis' mistake in interpreting the omen of the lioness are also revealing of Philostratus' understanding of true and false interpretation. Damis is misled, as he will be often in the remainder of the text, by his pessimism and self-interest. The reading of the omen which he produces is a projection of his own fear of a lengthy stay in Babylon.

This understanding that interpretation can be distorted by the fears of the interpreting subject is again not unique to Philostratus. Heliodorus too presents similar sequences of interpretation and correction where error is produced by self-interest.⁶ Thyamis, leader of the bandits who have captured the hero and heroine, dreams early in the *Aethiopica* that the goddess Isis appears to him and delivers a riddling oracle, very similar to the oracular speech of Apollonius, in which she states that she hands over Charicleia to him, and that he will possess her but not possess her, and will do wrong and kill the foreign woman, yet she will not be killed (Heliodorus I 18.4). Thyamis interprets this dream in various ways over the next few chapters as his situation changes.⁷ Heliodorus, however, is more direct in stating the cause of error than Philostratus: καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄναρ τοῦτον ἔφραξε τὸν τρόπον οὕτως αὐτῷ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἐξηγουμένης (Heliodorus I 19.1). In the same way, later in the novel, Charicleia tells Theagenes that his pessimism distorts his interpretation of a dream (Heliodorus VIII 11.5).⁸

Similarly in the VA, two of the common causes of misinterpretation are fear and self-interest. By implication then, Apollonius is a superior interpreter in part at least because of his greater detachment and command of his emotions. It is of interest for the understanding of Greek/Barbarian relations in both works that some of the clearest examples of interpretive distortion through fearful self-interest are attributed to barbarian characters: Damis of Nineveh in Philostratus and Thyamis in Heliodorus. Admittedly, such distortion is not the sole property of barbarians in either writer, but it is very much in keeping with the

⁶ On this tendency in Heliodorus see Bowersock 1994:91–93. On dreams and oracles in Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus see Bartsch 1989:80–108.

⁷ See Bartsch 1989:94ff. for analysis of Thyamis' changing understanding of his dream.

⁸ On "the interpreter's personal hopes or experience as the cause of error" see Bartsch 1989:83ff. The theme of interpretation distorted by fear and desire is taken to extremes by Rabelais (*Pantagruel* 3.9ff.) where every oracle is given two opposite interpretations.

perception of barbarians as excessively emotional which both authors share (for instance, Heliodorus I 30.6) and which is common elsewhere in Greek literature. Clear, detached interpretation is central to the Hellenic ideal which Philostratus has Apollonius represent.

The unquestionable authority which Philostratus attributes to Apollonius also serves on many occasions to close down interpretation. This is certainly the case here, where readers can be in little doubt that the master's reading of the lioness omen will be the correct one and not the disciple's. As Bartsch has observed, the presence of an interpreter figure in the context of an *ecphrasis* had become a literary convention. "Often a wise and elderly figure, or a character with privileged knowledge (such as a native of the region where the painting was seen), this interpreter speaks up soon after the narrator has expressed his own reaction; thus, the correct interpretation is always forthcoming, even if slightly delayed."⁹ Philostratus' portrayal here of Apollonius largely conforms to this convention. Though Damis is not the narrator, he is the ostensible source of Philostratus' narration, so the fact that he gives the initial opinions rather than the narrator is really a variation on the convention observed by Bartsch rather than a deviation from it.

The constant presence of a protagonist with almost unfailing understanding drastically curtails the possibility for readers to take "inferential walks".¹⁰ As Bartsch observes in her reading of the *Aethiopica*, the more manifest the divine plan becomes, the less room is left for readerly inference.¹¹ In the *VA*, where the main character is credited with a nearly infallible understanding, and generally explains his interpretation to the other characters present, less room remains.¹² There are, however, exceptions to this. On some occasions Apollonius withholds his interpretation, and on others where an interpretation appears to be given, more remains to be inferred by readers. Both situations will be discussed below.

A pattern of interpretation and reinterpretation similar to the interpretation of the lioness omen occurs a little later in the description and

⁹ Bartsch 1989:26.

¹⁰ Eco 1984:31–33. Adapted to the study of the ancient novel by Bartsch, especially 1989:44–45.

¹¹ Bartsch 1989:107.

¹² Dowden sees the space left for inferential walks in the *Aethiopica* as an opportunity "to replicate the cognitive skills of Calasiris and to practise cognitive skills, in a sort of tutorial" (1996:283–284). The *VA*, by contrast, provides a model of interpretation, but somewhat less opportunity to practise the skills represented.

interpretation of a dream of Apollonius (I 23).¹³ The sage dreams of fish lying out of water, calling out in human voices and begging for help from a passing dolphin. The description of their supplication implies at least that the fish stand for people, likening their cries to human beings weeping in a foreign land (ὥσπερ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἱ ἐν τῇ ξένῃ κλαίοντες, I 23). The Tyanean, we are told, was not frightened but began to interpret his dream. He decides, however, to play with Damis a little, and momentarily withholds his interpretation to alarm his disciple.¹⁴

Damis' interpretation is once again determined by his fears. He tries to dissuade Apollonius from continuing the journey, fearing they will be trapped in a foreign land and have to beg for mercy some foreign ruler who will treat them about as kindly as dolphins treat fish.¹⁵ Given the hints earlier in this chapter that the sage's interpretation is quite different, there is even less temptation to take Damis' reading here as the right one than there was in the lioness incident. Here too, though, it is not entirely implausible. It has already been implied that the fish represent humans, and it is sensible (within the framework of ancient oneirocriticism) to assume that the dream has to do with the two travellers and their journey. This is in fact true in a sense, though not in the way that Damis imagines. The main mistake in his reading of the dream is his fearful identification with the suffering fish rather than with the dolphin.

Here too, the Greek and barbarian distinction is as important as that of master and disciple. Damis is characterised as an overly emotional barbarian who is thus a flawed interpreter, despite his attempt to follow a method of interpretation similar to that of Apollonius. These two distinctions are linked throughout the VA, being stated most directly when Damis tells Iarchas that he attached himself to the sage to become more like him: a wise man instead of stupid and ignorant, and a *pepaideumenos* instead of a barbarian (III 43). This last opposition really combines both the educational and the cultural opposition in one: educated/Greek versus barbarian. In Philostratus' world, Hellenism and its educational requirements cannot be separated from civilisation.

¹³ On this episode see Jones 2001:194–197; Penella 1974:295–300. On Scopelian's use of some similar material see VS 514–521 and Bowersock 1969:44 and 91.

¹⁴ On this dream see Bartsch's brief comments: 1989:34–35.

¹⁵ The fish-guzzling of dolphins appears to have been proverbial. See *Life of Aesop* W 62: ὁ δὲ ὡς δελφίς ἥσθιε τοῦς ἰχθύας ("And he ate the fish like a dolphin.")

Another quality of Apollonius' interpretations of dreams and omens emerges here which will subsequently reappear: their breadth of reference. While Damis' interpretation focuses only on himself and his teacher, Apollonius takes into account Greek history stretching back five hundred years.¹⁶ When Damis is later asked by Iarchas whether he has learnt foreknowledge from his association with Apollonius, Damis replies that he has foreknowledge of what is necessary for him, likening his purely personal prophecies to those of an old beggar-woman making predictions "about sheep and such things" (III 43).¹⁷ This narrowness of reference is another aspect of the self-interest which was portrayed as distorting Damis' readings. His interpretations are characterised throughout the VA as paranoid, focused on himself and distorted by his fears. Apollonius, on the other hand, is presented as the right sort of interpreter, suitably detached from his own perspective in both his freedom from fear and breadth of reference. In the decipherment of the fish-dream too, knowledge and Hellenic knowledge are conflated in that it is Greek history (Herodotus) which is of use in interpreting the dream and the situation to which it refers. Just as Artemidorus had earlier argued that the dream interpreter must be both widely educated and informed about local matters,¹⁸ so the ideal interpreter of the VA draws upon Hellenic tradition to make an accurate interpretation. As Elsner has observed, believability is "a category of identity".¹⁹ The same can be said of relevance in interpretation.

Another scene in which a pair of interpretations is given comes some time later (IV 28), when the sage comes to Olympia and sees the statue of the athlete Milo there. This is described as a bronze statue of the athlete standing on a disk with feet close together. He holds a pomegranate in his left hand while the fingers of his right hand are held straight as if being inserted into something (ὀρθοὶ τῆς χειρὸς ἐκείνης οἱ δάκτυλοι καὶ οἶον διείποντες, IV 28). The first account which is given of this statue is

¹⁶ Philostratus' account is adapted from Herodotus (Herodotus VI 119). On the geographical distortions resultant from Philostratus' apparent misreading of Herodotus, see Jones 2001:194–195.

¹⁷ Cf. Artemidorus' assertion that private individuals cannot have dreams of public significance, though the dreams of many private citizens regarding the same public matter may be significant (Artemidorus 1.2).

¹⁸ Local matters: Artemidorus 4.4. Artemidorus stresses the importance of knowledge of traditions of dream interpretation (*praef.*), and it is clear from his practice that a familiarity with Greek tradition beyond the sphere of oneirocriticism is also necessary, for instance, knowledge of the characteristics of the various gods (2.44).

¹⁹ Elsner 1994:224–254, citation from 253.

the local one (οἱ μὲν δὴ κατ' Ὀλυμπίαν τε καὶ Ἀρκαδίαν λόγοι), which explains that the athlete was impossible to move from the place where he stood and that his firmness of grip is demonstrated by his grip on the pomegranate. The fillet on his head is read as a symbol of self-discipline (*sophrosyne*). This largely corresponds to the account given by Pausanias (6.14.5–7), though the periegete's version is more detailed.²⁰ He states that Milo would hold the pomegranate so tightly that no one could take it from him, and would stand on an oiled disk and make a laughingstock of those who tried to push him off (Pausanias 6.14.6). Similarly the fillet around his head is explained by a story that Milo used to tie a string (χορδήν) on his head and break it by the strength of his veins (ὕπὸ ἰσχύος τῶν φλεβῶν, Pausanias 6.14.7).

Philostratus' first interpretation has clear similarities to Pausanias' version: both the disk and the pomegranate are taken to represent the athlete's demonstrations of strength, though the reading of the fillet as a symbol of *sophrosyne* is quite different to the more dramatic, vein-popping version in the *Periêgêsis*. It is, of course, possible that Philostratus has drawn his first interpretation from Pausanias. The hypothesis that Pausanias' work went unread or at least uncited for centuries is looking increasingly less likely.²¹ There are, however, no particularly close linguistic echoes in Philostratus' account of Milo to indicate that he is drawing on Pausanias. It is just as possible that he had heard stories at Olympia or elsewhere similar to those that the periegete had heard before him. In either case, Philostratus has compressed this explanation, perhaps assuming that his readership would already be familiar with this material, or perhaps because the sideshow details of Milo's demonstrations did not appeal to him.²²

In any case the first explanation is rejected, albeit respectfully: ὁ δὲ Ἀπολλώνιος σοφῶς μὲν εἶπεν ἐπινενοῆσθαι ταῦτα, σοφώτερα δὲ εἶναι τὰ ἀληθέστερα ("And Apollonius said that these things were wisely thought out, but that the truer explanation was wiser", IV 28). Though this scene presents another pair of interpretations, the implications of

²⁰ See also Herodotus 3.137 on Democedes' engagement to the daughter of Milo.

²¹ On the growing body of evidence against the notion that Pausanias' work went unread see Bowie 2001:21–32; Snodgrass 2003:187–189; Dickie 1997:11–20. Rusten (2004:152–155) finds a convincing series of parallels between Pausanias and the *Heroicus* regarding bones of heroes, but resists the likely conclusion that Philostratus had indeed read Pausanias (155–158).

²² It seems, however, that the character of Milo did. His name reappears in a list of famous athletes at *Gym.* 1.

the dialogue are not the same as in the earlier examples. While in the previous two instances the shift had been from a reading vitiated by self-interest and fear, the two readings here cannot be differentiated on these grounds. Both are Greek readings and the fear and self-interest which had been factors earlier play no part here. Nor is this a contrast between false and true, but rather between wise and wiser, true and truer (σοφώτερα, ἀληθέστερα). The two interpretations are represented as occupying different positions on a scale of truthfulness.

Whereas the first account draws on athletic legend, Apollonius' interpretation is based on cult and art history.²³ Milo, the sage states, was made a priest of Hera by the people of Croton. This explains the fillet and the pomegranate, since this fruit is said to be "the only fruit grown for Hera" (IV 28). The right hand is said to be in a gesture of prayer, while the tightly clenched fingers and the position of the feet are explained as features of ancient sculpture. Rather than relying on the Greek-barbarian dichotomy, this interpretive dialogue turns on a hierarchy within Hellenic identity. While athletics is one cornerstone of Hellenism, as Philostratus' own *Gymnasticus* demonstrates, from a sophist's perspective it is less central to Hellenic culture than religion and history, and consequently has less explanatory value. As Whitmarsh observes, "although *paideia* could comprehend musical, artistic, and athletic excellence, it was literature that occupied the primary focus of Roman Greek *pepaideumenoi*."²⁴

As is usual in these interpretive scenes, once Apollonius has given his final reading the dialogue is ended and the narrative moves on to something else, though here the first interpretation is not dismissed but rather improved upon. It appears, however, that more could be said, or rather, that more is left for readers to infer. Milo of Croton appears in lists of the students of Pythagoras,²⁵ and the final massacre of the Pythagoreans is said by both Iamblichus and Porphyry to have occurred in Milo's house.²⁶ Given Apollonius' own philosophical affiliation, the omission of Milo's Pythagorean connections here can only

²³ On the religious aspects of Greek art in general see Elsner 1996:515–531 and on the mixture of athletic, art-historical and religious discourses in this scene 522–523. Also more recently Elsner 2000a.

²⁴ Whitmarsh 2001:38.

²⁵ Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* (*On the Pythagorean Life*) 267 (189.4) (194.3 as husband of Muia, one of Pythagoras' female followers), and 104 (76.9) as one of the followers of Pythagoras.

²⁶ Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 249 (173.19ff.); Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae* 55.

be a gap which has been left for readers to fill. The reference to Milo's origins in Croton serves as a further prompt, given the town's strong Pythagorean associations.

Furthermore the combination Hera-pomegranate-Pythagoreanism occurs in another context: the *Heraion* near Mycene. Here, as Pausanias relates, there was a chryselephantine statue of the goddess by Polyclitus (Pausanias 2.17.4), holding a pomegranate.²⁷ This same temple contained the shield which Menelaos took from Euphorbus at Troy (Pausanias 2.17.3), and which Pythagoras identified as his own.²⁸

The specifically Pythagorean material relevant to the statue of Milo is passed over by Apollonius in silence. He is, after all, looking at the image of a predecessor in his own philosophical school, a disciple of Pythagoras. While it is quite plausible for the sage to read the pomegranate as a reference to the worship of Hera, the combination of Pythagoreanism, the pomegranate and the goddess recall the similar collocation in the Argive *Heraion*.²⁹ The actions of Pythagoras there, like those of Apollonius here, are concerned with succession and spiritual ancestry. For Pythagoras, the recognition of the shield is a recognition of his former life and a kind of homage to it, while for Apollonius, viewing the statue of Milo is a communion with an illustrious predecessor in his philosophical school. In this light, the episode of the statue of Milo plays a similar role to Apollonius' visit to the tomb of Palamedes, establishing the VA's protagonist within a spiritual and philosophical tradition.

If this is the point though, why pass over it in silence? Despite the tendency to limit the space allowed for readers to make their own

²⁷ There are several instances of statues holding pomegranates. As Byrne observes (1993:166), "[a]rchaic *korai* may offer a pomegranate or hold one to the breast". On Pomegranate symbolism in general see Byrne's bibliography and Engemann, "Granatapfel", in RE. An unexplained pomegranate also appears in *Leukippe and Cleitophon* (3.6) in the hand of a statue of Zeus Kasios which is, as Anderson observes (1979a:516–518) "an open invitation to allegorists". The refusal to interpret is given in very similar language by Pausanias and Achilles Tatius: τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐς τὴν ροιάν, ἀπορρητότερος γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος, ἀφείσθω μοι (Pausanias 2.17.4) and τῆς δὲ ροιᾶς ὁ λόγος μυστικός (Achilles Tatius 3.6).

²⁸ On Pythagoras' choice of Euphorbus see Burkert 1972:38–141; Hendry 1995:210–211. Porphyry and Iamblichus relate this episode in identical wording, as indeed much of this passage in the two authors is identical. Evidently either Iamblichus is drawing on Porphyry or both are quoting verbatim from the same source: τὰ γὰρ ἱστορούμενα περὶ τῆς ἐν Μυκῆναις ἀνακειμένης σὺν Τρωϊκοῖς λαφύροις τῇ Ἀργεῖᾳ Ἑρᾷ Εὐφόρβου τοῦ Φρυγὸς τούτου ἀσπίδος παρίεμεν ὡς πάννυ δημόδῃ (Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae* 27; Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 63).

²⁹ This was, after all, a well known (δημόδῃ) story.

interpretations, there are in the VA several occasions on which the interpretive work is left to readers, as we shall see more fully when examining the scenes in which Apollonius' interpretation is withheld. By making readers work to determine the significance of an object or event, that significance is in fact emphasised.³⁰ Apollonius has just demonstrated an interpretation improving on that of the locals, and readers are invited to expand in turn on that given by Apollonius.

Withheld Interpretations

In the scenes in which Apollonius acts as an interpreter, the possibilities of further discussion tend to be limited or shut down by the sage giving the last word. Readers are left for the most part with relatively little further room for 'interpretive walks'. There are, however, several occasions on which the Tyanean refuses to give an interpretation, or on which Philostratus suppresses his interpretation, stating only that one was given. It is to these scenes that I shall now briefly turn.

The first occasion on which Apollonius' interpretation is deliberately withheld is when he is in ἡ ἀρχαία Νῖνος ("ancient Ninos"), immediately before meeting Damis (I 19).³¹ After a brief description of a statue, a horned, female figure identified by the narrating voice as Io, we are simply told that Apollonius understood more about it than the priests and prophets, before Damis enters and their long association as master and disciple begins. The suppression of Apollonius' reading of the statue leaves readers' interpretive options open. As Bartsch observes, "When no interpretation in the text is clearly marked as definitive, the readers find themselves compelled, in the very act of reading, to come to some decision about the passage at hand."³² When the authoritative interpretation is mentioned and suppressed, the invitation to conjecture is certainly even stronger.

³⁰ On the meaning of *emphasis* in ancient rhetoric and the practice of concealing in order to emphasise, see Ahl 1984:176–180.

³¹ On the identity of this city, see Jones 2001:187–190. The identification of the city as Hierapolis is significant for an understanding of the statue which Apollonius views here. As Jones observes: "He must be referring to the famous cult-statue of 'the Syrian Goddess', though Lucian's description is much closer to the copies found in other cities such as Dura-Europos" (190, with further bibliography). See also Graf 1984–5 (also with further bibliography).

³² Bartsch 1989:38.

As Jones observes, Io is not among the various syncretic options which Lucian suggests for the Syrian goddess, though Lucian does opt for Hera as the Greek equivalent, who like Io is closely associated with Argos.³³ While it is quite possible that, as Jones suggests, “ancient Ninos” claimed Argive origins, Philostratus’ use of the goddess here under the name of Io can be seen to play further roles within the VA. He has selected this particular identification for the goddess from a range of options.

Given the well-known tendency for descriptions of artworks in ancient literature to prefigure in some way the narrative in which they are set, it is open to readers to make conjectures about what the statue here indicates about future events. Since Apollonius is just beginning his journey to the east, the wanderings of Io may well be the first association to come to mind. Apollonius’ and Io’s itineraries, in fact, will coincide to the extent that both will visit Egypt and the place where Prometheus was bound in the Caucasus.³⁴ Furthermore, just as Io appears here at the beginning of Apollonius’ encounter with the east, she had appeared in a similarly programmatic position in Herodotus, as part of the explanation of the beginning of conflict (διαφορά) between Asia and Europe (Herodotus 1.1–2). While the eastern journey of Apollonius will not be concerned with conflict between groups of cultures, it will certainly be concerned with differences between Greeks and others.³⁵

The suppressed interpretation here, “wiser than that of the priests and prophets”, forms a ring composition with a similar suppressed interpretation of the statue of Aphrodite at Paphos (III 58) after Apollonius’ journey to India and back, where again his reading of the statue is said to be superior to that of the priests, whom he instructs. In this latter passage we are only told that the sage marvelled at the statue’s symbolic construction (ὁ συμβολικῶς ἰδρυμένον θαυμάσαι τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον) and the contents of his teaching are passed over in silence. Ninos/Hierapolis is recalled in this same chapter (ἐπὶ τὴν Νῖνον ἐλθεῖν αὐθις), strengthening the connection between the two statues. There is a further link between the two which is unmentioned in this passage. Herodotus states that the Assyrians were the first to worship *Ourania*

³³ Jones 2001:190. On Lucian’s *De Dea Syria* (*On the Syrian Goddess*) see Lightfoot 2003.

³⁴ See Laplace 1983:311–318, for a reading of the wanderings of Leucippe in *Leucippe and Cleitophon* as based on those of Io.

³⁵ This same Syrian temple is the focus of Lucian’s (or Pseudo-Lucian’s) subtle self-positioning relative to Greek and Syrian culture. On this topic see Elsner 2001.

Aphrodite ("the Heavenly Aphrodite") and the people of Paphos second. The Aphrodite of Cyprus came from that of Syria/Assyria, according to the people of Cyprus themselves.³⁶ If Philostratus were aware of the alternative interpretation of the 'Io' in Ninos as *Ourania* which Lucian gives (*De Dea Syria* 32), the journey would be framed by two versions of the same goddess.

The Paphian Aphrodite, which Philostratus does not describe, was an aniconic image. The object which Apollonius interprets here is, in fact, a conical stone. Both protagonist and narrator are similarly silent on the imageless worship which was practised in the temple of Heracles/Melqart in Gadeira, as reported by Silius Italicus.³⁷ As Fleischer observes, the Paphian Aphrodite stands on the border between Greek and 'eastern' religion and representations of the gods.³⁸ In this too it forms a pair with the Io in Ninos. Both are liminal figures, on the border between Hellenic and non-Hellenic, thus neatly providing a frame for Apollonius' journey outside the Greek world.

Framing the journey to India with these scenes in which the authoritative interpretation is withheld raises interpretation as an issue in the enclosed chapters. Readers are invited to assimilate themselves to the position of Hellenic interpreter which Apollonius holds while vicariously experiencing the foreign parts which are described in the course of the journey. The choice of figures is also significant in each case. The journey begins with a Hellenised description of a non-Greek goddess, raising the themes of foreign travel and encounters between Europe and Asia, and introducing both the subject matter (non-Greek cultures) and the framework through which they are viewed (Hellenism and syncretism). The statue of Aphrodite at the conclusion of Apollonius' eastern journey returns both readers and characters to the more familiar centre, but does this through a figure who is herself a mixture of Greek and non-Greek. Apollonius and Damis have returned to the Greek world by the same path which the goddess took, from Syria to Paphos.

At the temple of the two Heracleis in Gadeira, Apollonius again refuses to reveal his interpretation. On the pillars of gold and silver in this temple, resembling anvils (V 5), are inscriptions which are written οὔτε Αἰγυπτίοις οὔτε Ἰνδικοῖς γράμμασιν, οὔτε οἰοῖς ξυμβαλεῖν

³⁶ Herodotus 1.105, followed by Pausanias 1.14.7. On this statue see Fleischer 1984:9.

³⁷ Silius Italicus 3.30–31.

³⁸ Fleischer 1984:9.

(“neither in Egyptian nor in Indian letters, nor in such as could be guessed”).³⁹ Apollonius again refuses to reveal his knowledge, and the local priests likewise refuse to reveal theirs (οὐδὲν οἱ ἱερεῖς ἔφραζον). Here, the familiar pattern of interpretation and counter-interpretation is replaced with silence and counter-silence.

The most obvious effect of this refusal to read is to stress the mystery of the temple and its pillars.⁴⁰ Just as strange characters and indecipherable words play a part in the magical practices described in the papyri, suggesting perhaps a language of the gods, or at any rate a language of power to which the physical world is forced to respond, so the unknown language here is not only a collection of signs but is able to exert a force on nature. The pillars are the bonds of earth and Ocean, which Heracles inscribed in the house of the Fates.⁴¹ They prevent discord between the elements and preserve their love for each other.⁴²

Apollonius’ silence, besides forming part of the ongoing contrast between the sage’s knowledge and the more limited knowledge of local priesthods,⁴³ and varying the scenes of interpretive dialogues with a contest of hieratic silences, also suggests the recurring theme of the superiority of Greek understanding. The temple of Heracles at Gadeira was in fact a Phoenician temple of Melqart, though there is no direct reference to its origins in the account of Apollonius’ visit there.⁴⁴ Whatever the complexities of the ethnic identity of the temple, it is clear that it maintained traces of its Phoenician origins even in the imperial era.⁴⁵

³⁹ The last phrase, οὐτε οἷς συμβαλεῖν, is odd if taken as “nor of any kind which he could decipher” as Conybeare does. Mumprecht’s rendering, “und auch nicht andern bekannten Alphabeten einzureihen sind” or Christopher Jones’ “nor such as could be guessed” are better. Apollonius’ understanding of the inscription is presumably what he is forbidden to reveal by the Egyptian Heracles.

⁴⁰ On Pausanias’ use of silence in the context of the Mysteries see Elsner 1995:144–150.

⁴¹ Heracles’ inscription of the altars resembles somewhat Palamedes’ account of his discovery of the alphabet (*Heroicus* 33.10–11). The letters, he says, had previously lain in the house of the Fates and needed someone like himself to reveal them.

⁴² Philostratus makes use here, of course, of the teaching of Empedocles on Love and Strife, as Mumprecht observes (1983:1079n17).

⁴³ For instance his clash with the priests at the oracle of Trophonius (VIII 19) or the many occasions on which he reforms the rites of various temples. On the question of the historicity of Apollonius’ role as reformer see Bowie 1978:1688–1690.

⁴⁴ Its Phoenician origins are obliquely recalled by allusion to the Tyrian temple of Heracles/Melqart from which the temple at Gadeira was established. As Mumprecht notes, the gold and silver of the pillars recall those of the Tyrian temple in Herodotus’ description (*Herodotus* 2.44).

⁴⁵ On this temple in general see especially Fear 2005, who observes that the temple and its rituals ‘remained firmly Punic throughout the Roman period’ (320).

The priests here are presumably Phoenician, and although Philostratus praises Gadeira for its attempts at Hellenic culture (V 4), and though it is characterised as less benighted than its neighbours (V 7), it is nevertheless far removed from Greece. Here again then, a scene of (refused) interpretations is used to contrast Greek and non-Greek understanding and to privilege the former.

On each occasion when Apollonius refuses to give his interpretation of an object, it is an object of religious significance which is in question: the statues of Io and Aphrodite and the Pillars of Heracles. Besides allowing readers to make their own conjectures about what the relationship of the object to the narrative will be, as discussed above, this silence also leaves open the religious significance of the works described. The most obvious advantage of this is that such openness of possible significance creates a more powerful impression than any definite reading would be likely to. It is easier to create an aura of sanctity around a mystery than around an ordinary statement, whether presented symbolically or not, which can be questioned, countered, denied.

Furthermore, this reticence in speaking about divinity is also evident in the anger which Philostratus has Apollonius show towards those who try to speak on such topics. When the sage rebukes a youth who has tried to write an encomium of Zeus, it is not simply that he has tried to achieve something beyond his own powers with which Apollonius finds fault, but that he has attempted something beyond any human being (IV 30). The expression of uncertainty about how to name particular gods had, of course, a long history in Greek religion and literature,⁴⁶ but the denial of human ability to speak about Zeus is a more extreme position, implying a conception of divinity far removed from the human world. This sense of the remoteness of divinity may in fact represent the opinion of the historical Apollonius, or at least an opinion which had already been attributed to him. The only possible surviving fragment of his writings, a section of his *Peri Thusiōn*,⁴⁷ states that only a sacrifice of pure thought is appropriate, stressing the perfection of the highest god. Though the surviving passage does not discuss how one should speak about this deity, a similar view to that of the Philostratean Apollonius on the ineffability of god would be quite compatible.

⁴⁶ See for instance Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 160ff.

⁴⁷ Porphyry *De Abstinētia* (*On Abstinence from Animals*) 2.34; Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 4.13.

Each of the episodes in which Apollonius' interpretation is withheld is also concerned with objects of non-Greek origin. The 'Io' in old Ninos is in fact a local goddess, the Aphrodite of Paphos was adopted from Syria and the temple of Heracles at Gadeira is a temple of the Phoenician Melqart. If the withholding of interpretation is an invitation to readers to employ their own interpretive skills, then these scenes invite readers not simply to become interpreters but to become Hellenic interpreters of non-Hellenic material. Readers are invited to assimilate themselves to a Hellenic gaze which is able to understand non-Greeks better than they understand themselves.

The withholding of interpretation, then, serves several purposes in the VA. It invites the text's readers to employ their own interpretive skills, while at the same time maintaining a sense of mystery and meaning around the religious objects with which these episodes are concerned. In the case of the Io in Ninos and the Paphian Aphrodite it serves both as a frame to the journey to India and a cue to readers regarding the interpretation of the section of the text which they frame.⁴⁸ Finally the non-Greek nature of all of the items which are left uninterpreted is significant for the text's positioning of its implied audience relative to the Hellenic and the non-Hellenic.

Apollonius as Object of Interpretation

Apollonius is made throughout the VA to function as an interpreter within the text. At the same time, however, he is often himself an object requiring interpretation, making remarks and prophecies in an oracular tone. The oracular can come quite close to the sophistic, and this type of language can easily be paralleled in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*, as has often been observed. As Anderson notes, "While all the trappings of the sophist can be transferred to Apollonius, a fair proportion will coincide with the normal attributes of the sage."⁴⁹ It is not my concern here to attempt to disentangle the Philostratean additions to the characterisation of Apollonius from whatever substrate of prephilostratean material is left. Rather, I would like to consider the effect of the representation of Apollonius as enigmatic interpreter.

⁴⁸ Whitmarsh (2004:423–439) sees the eastern journey in general as "a programmatic education in reading the miracle-working of Apollonius" (435).

⁴⁹ Anderson 1986:125. On the sophistic qualities of Apollonius see 124ff.

Apollonius' oracular tone can be heard, for instance, in his prediction regarding Nero's attempt to cut the isthmus of Corinth: ὁ ἀρχὴν τῆς γῆς τετμήσεται, μᾶλλον δὲ οὐ (IV 24).⁵⁰ Or again, the same tone is found in the description of the Brahmins which Philostratus 'quotes': "I saw... Indian Brahmins living on the earth and not on it, and walled in without walls, and owning nothing or everything (III 15)." While Apollonius' language is in itself enigmatic, the narrating voice intervenes on both occasions to clarify his meaning. This is, in fact, generally the case with the protagonist's more enigmatic utterances. The ambiguity which could arise from the depiction of the text's central interpretive voice as enigmatic is limited by the intervention of the narrator.

Just as Apollonius' refusals to interpret invite readers to make their own inferences about the meaning of the events and objects in the text, his oracular utterances can create a similar opportunity. When, for instance, Apollonius tells Damis that he will reappear to him in Dicaearchia alive, as he thinks, but that Damis will think him risen from the dead (ὥς μὲν ἐγὼ οἶμαι, ζῶντα... ὥς δὲ σὺ οἶε, ἀναβεβιωκότα, VII 41), he both foreshadows his escape and leaves open other possibilities. It is possible at this point that he will reappear to Damis after his death, as he does in fact appear to an unnamed young philosopher at the conclusion of the VA (VIII 31), and that he will then be living only in a metaphorical sense, alive after death. A martyrdom in the manner of Socrates at the hands of Domitian is not an unlikely narrative option, and if uncertainty about Apollonius' death actually existed as Philostratus claims (VIII 30), even the interested reader may have had no certain information.

There is a tension throughout the VA between clarity and an oracular tone in the representation of Apollonius' language. This tension is evident already in the initial description of his style. While the narrating voice is careful to define his moderate degree of Atticism and the brevity and "adamantine" quality of his teaching (I 17), he is also said to speak ὥσπερ ἐκ τρίποδος ("as if from a tripod").⁵¹ In addition to suggesting the authority with which Apollonius speaks, the phrase also gives an impression of a riddling voice, or more specifically of a Delphic one.

⁵⁰ The theme of cutting the Isthmus appears with some frequency in Second Sophistic literature. The Pseudo-Lucianic *Nero*, possibly by the author of the VA, deals with this topic. On the dialogue see Whitmarsh 1999a. On Herodes Atticus' intentions of undertaking the same project see *Lives of the Sophists* 551–552.

⁵¹ On the mantic quality of sophists' language see *Lives of the Sophists* 480–481.

This association with the oracle of Apollo, appropriate on the basis of Apollonius' name as well as his character, is obliquely reiterated at his first meeting with Damis. Here, in response to Damis' offer to act as interpreter of the languages of the countries through which Apollonius intends to travel, the sage replies that he knows all human languages. When Damis is surprised at this, Apollonius says: "Do not be surprised if I know all the languages of men", οἶδα γὰρ δὴ καὶ ὅσα σιωπῶσιν ἄνθρωποι ("for I know also the things which men do not say") (I 19).⁵² Though the language is different, the claim to understand what men do not say recalls the similar claim made by the Delphic oracle in response to Croesus' testing in Herodotus:⁵³ οἶδα δ' ἐγὼ ψάμμου τ' ἀριθμὸν καὶ μέτρα θαλάσσης, / καὶ κωφοῦ συνίημι καὶ οὐ φωνεῖντος ἀκούω ("I know the number of the sands and the measure of the sea, and I understand the mute and hear the one who does not speak", Herodotus 1.47).

On these two occasions at least, Apollonius is portrayed not only with an oracular character, but with a specifically Delphic one. His delivery of his final, posthumous oracle in hexameters is likewise reminiscent of an oracle. Like Delphi in the Greek world, Apollonius functions in the text as the interpretive centre-point, and like Delphi, he too calls on the interpretive skills of the reader/enquirer.⁵⁴

Furthermore, the situation in which the oracle is delivered in Herodotus is also significant for the passage in which it is recalled in the VA. The oracle is spoken as part of the establishment of the authority of Delphi, not only within the Greek world but also beyond. Like Croesus, the character addressed in the VA passage, Damis, is a non-Greek. The Herodotean passage in which the oracle is given is part of the education of Croesus and his transformation from an ignorant but powerful ruler to a person without royal power but with greater insight. Similarly, Damis' education/Hellenisation is beginning in this scene.

The dual nature of Apollonius as both interpreter and as object of interpretation resembles his dual role as both pilgrim and object of

⁵² For other parallels to Apollonius' ability to understand people's inner thoughts, see Mumprecht 1983:1034n69.

⁵³ How and Wells (1912:73) aptly compare Pindar, *Pythian* 9.44ff.

⁵⁴ For a comic version of the interpreter in need of interpretation see *Life of Aesop* G85, where the Samians call for a second interpreter of prodigies to interpret the prodigiously ugly Aesop who has been called in as interpreter.

pilgrimage.⁵⁵ Just as readers become vicarious pilgrims by reading of Apollonius' journeys and become pilgrims to Apollonius himself by reading about him,⁵⁶ they become interpreters both by following, extending and imagining the protagonist's interpretations and by applying their interpretive skills to him. These two dualities (pilgrim/object of pilgrimage, interpreter/object of interpretation) are closely related to each other, and are combined, for instance, in the narrative of Apollonius' return to Greece after his journey to India. Apollonius, returning from his travels, wonders at (θαυμάσαι) and interprets the Paphian Aphrodite. Sailing to Ionia he is wondered at himself (θαυμαζόμενον) among those who honour wisdom (III 58), becoming both the object of interpretation and an object of pilgrimage.

Apollonius as Theorist of Interpretation

In addition to the scenes discussed above, in which interpretation is narrativised through Apollonius and the other characters whom he meets, the VA contains two major scenes in which its protagonist theorises about interpretation. Some aspects of these passages were discussed early last century in Ella Birmelin's article, "Die kunsttheoretischen Gedanken in Philostrats Apollonios". Birmelin's focus, as her title announces, was almost entirely on Apollonius'/Philostratus' theoretical statements on art in the discussions of *mimêsis* (II 22) and *phantasia* (VI 19), and she attempted in particular to determine the sources on which Philostratus drew.⁵⁷ While Birmelin's study addresses this one, important part of the interpretive concerns of the VA, the theoretical discussion of art theory remains only one aspect of the text's broader hermeneutic interest. Philostratus' sage is also concerned with the interpretation of other objects, such as dreams, omens and the natural world. All of these are objects of his interpretive gaze, and are best considered together.⁵⁸ The

⁵⁵ On the "hagiographic twist" which turns Apollonius from pilgrim to object of pilgrimage see Elsner 1997:27–28.

⁵⁶ Elsner 1997:28.

⁵⁷ Her conclusion is that Philostratus draws in these passages on Peripatetic and Academic teachings, the latter as represented by Antiochus (1933:414). As Watson observes, "Birmelin...for the most part ignores the possibility of Stoic influences", probably in reaction to B. Schweitzer's attempt to trace this influence in the VA (1925:28–132). On *phantasia* in Philostratus and beyond see Watson 1994:4765–4810.

⁵⁸ Birmelin does, however, acknowledge that the scenes in which art objects appear and are interpreted are also relevant to an understanding of the text's art theory

two passages which Birmelin selects are, however, certainly the most important in the text for theory of interpretation, and it will be best to begin with a discussion of them. More recently, these passages have been discussed as ‘implizite Poetologie’ by Thomas Schirren.⁵⁹ I am in agreement with Schirren in seeing these passages as important within the text as a whole and as part of its reflection on its own practice of representation. Our readings differ, however, when it comes to what is being said about interpretation in these passages, as will become clear in what follows.

I. *Mimêsis*⁶⁰

While Apollonius and Damis wait in a temple to meet the king in Taxila, the sage begins a discussion of painting (II 22). Partly, this serves as a further piece of characterisation of Apollonius, showing him philosophising in the quiet moments of his travels. This type of learned digression occurs frequently, of course, throughout the VA, and is often presented in dialogue form as it is here.⁶¹ In this instance, the discussion follows on neatly from the descriptions of the bronze tablets depicting Alexander and Porus (II 20) and returns to these in its conclusion (II 22), forming a small ring-composition.⁶²

As Birmelin observed, Apollonius’ statements here draw heavily on Aristotle’s discussion of *mimêsis* in the *Poetics*. To say, however, that it is ‘nothing but’ a repetition of Aristotle’s theory of *mimêsis*⁶³ neglects the differences of emphasis in Philostratus’/Apollonius’ version of the theory. The most striking difference between the two is the much greater

(1933:151–152). A further limitation of Birmelin’s study, as Elsner observes, is “its refusal to link the VA with any reference to the *Imagines*” (2000b:256n16). Given the focus of the present study, the *Imagines* cannot be considered in detail, but only in so far as they illuminate the VA.

⁵⁹ Schirren 2005:272–285.

⁶⁰ On ideas of *mimêsis* in the classical period and their modern reception: Halliwell 2002.

⁶¹ See for instance the discussion of the (probably imaginary) poet Damophyle (I 30) (on whom see Jones 2001:197–198); or the discussion of the religious significance of altitude (II 5).

⁶² These representations of Alexander and Porus themselves form a larger ring-composition with the statues of these figures described as Apollonius departs after his stay with Phraotes (II 42), forming a frame around the episode. On ring-composition in the *Imagines* see J. Elsner 2000b; and in the *Heroicus*: Beschorner 1999:212–214.

⁶³ “Es dürfte schon im Laufe der Betrachtung klar geworden sein, daß die philostratische Abhandlung über Malerei nichts anderes wiedergibt als die Mimesistheorie der aristotelischen Poetik” (Birmelin 1933:178–179).

stress which Philostratus places on the role of the viewer. It seems impossible to be certain whether this is Philostratus' own innovation or a development of the Aristotelean theory which he has borrowed from a previous writer.⁶⁴

Discussing images in the clouds such as centaurs and goat-deer, wolves and horses, Apollonius rejects the idea that these are works of divine *mimêsis* drawn by a god. Rather, he argues that even in an object where there is no intention to present an image, a viewer can still discern one. This, he says, is because "we have a mimetic faculty by nature which arranges and creates [the figures]" (ἡμᾶς δὲ φύσει τὸ μιμητικὸν ἔχοντας ἀναρρυθμίζειν τε αὐτὰ καὶ ποιεῖν, II 22). The statement that human beings possess a mimetic faculty by nature is, of course, straight from the *Poetics* (1448b20–1), but the emphasis on the viewer's exercise of this faculty which Philostratus/Apollonius describes is quite unlike Aristotle. Though Aristotle does discuss the pleasure of the viewer as a pleasure in recognising what the items in a representation are (1448b15), this is described as an inferential exercise (μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι, 1448b16) rather than a separate mimetic act.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Philostratus/Apollonius also describes this internal mimetic faculty in terms of one of the other innate, creative activities which Aristotle claims for humanity: that of rhythm (1448b20–21). Human beings, Apollonius states, having a mimetic faculty by nature, rearrange and create (ἀναρρυθμίζειν τε αὐτὰ καὶ ποιεῖν) the figures seen in the clouds.⁶⁶ In short, Philostratus' careful choice of words here implies, through evocation of Aristotle and difference from him, that all of the faculties of creative activity are also present in an equally

⁶⁴ Birmelin speculates that it may have been the teaching of the peripatetic school (1933:179–180).

⁶⁵ By equating the recognition of the contents of a representation with the exercise of the mimetic faculty, Birmelin finds already in Aristotle the theory that the viewer interprets art through a second act of *mimêsis* (1933:174–175). Though Aristotle does indeed argue that a person's first learning in childhood is through *mimêsis* (1448b5–9), this does not necessarily mean that he considers all learning to be mimetic, or the particular 'learning' by which one interprets a representation. Even if the viewer's activity were considered mimetic in Aristotle, the emphasis in Philostratus is quite different. While the *Poetics* focuses almost entirely on the activity of the creator of representations, the Philostratean passage puts new emphasis on the role of the interpreter of an existing representation.

⁶⁶ The compound ἀναρρυθμίζειν is apparently a *hapax*. The prefix ἀνα- may signify an increase in existing rhythmic/orderly qualities (LSJ s.v. ἀνά F2) or the notion of "repetition or improvement" (F3), that is, that the existing order is repeated and/or improved upon in the mind of the viewer.

creative process of reception. So much so, in fact, that τὸ μιμητικόν (“the mimetic faculty”) can create and interpret images where none were intended at all.

Following this part of the discussion, and apparently turning to address Damis’ initial definition of graphic art as the mixing and deployment of colours, Apollonius introduces a new point, the importance of previous knowledge in viewing (II 22). A single colour, he says, can be enough to represent multi-coloured objects, so that an Indian drawn in white will still seem black to those who do not look ignorantly (τοῖς γε μὴ ἀνοήτως ὀρώσιν). The important factor, he says, is prior knowledge of the objects depicted. The first examples which he uses after the example of an Indian person are again animals but these are followed by a mythic one, Ajax. As Birmelin observes, the viewer once again repeats the action of the artist, imagining the madness of Ajax, in order to identify the picture.⁶⁷ One has first to have taken an image of Ajax into one’s mind and considered the likelihood that having killed the cattle in Troy he would plan to kill himself. Here again, the concerns of the VA overlap with those of the *Imagines*. There too the concern is with instruction in how to view, and identifying which mythic story a painting represents is considered a significant part of educated viewing.⁶⁸

The example of Ajax serves to extend the discussion of *mimēsis* from that of the immediate objects of perception to characters of myth/history. These are depicted not by reference to a perceived object but ὡς εἰκός, “according to probability”. This too is adapted from the *Poetics* (1451a12, 1456a24).⁶⁹ As in Philostratus’/Apollonius’ remarks on *mimēsis* and the role of the interpreter, here too Aristotle’s ideas are developed rather than simply quoted. It is implied in the *Poetics* that the viewer’s prior knowledge is called into play in recognising what a work of art represents,⁷⁰ but this knowledge is not the focus of Aristotle’s attention as it is the focus of Philostratus’, nor is the importance of knowledge

⁶⁷ Birmelin 1933:166.

⁶⁸ On the *Imagines* as instruction in viewing see the proem and *passim*, and Elsner 1995:28–39. On the representation of the viewing process in the *Imagines* see Michel 1974:457–466.

⁶⁹ As Birmelin observes (1933:166). In the *Imagines*’ proem also, one of the most valuable features of painting is said to be its contribution to knowledge of the actions and appearance of heroes (ἡρώων ἔργα καὶ εἶδη).

⁷⁰ For instance *Poetics* 1448b15: διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὀρώντες, ὅτι συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τί ἕκαστον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος. The sudden appearance of masculine pronouns (οὗτος ἐκεῖνος) at the end of the sentence implies that we are to think of recognition of a person rather than thing.

of myth prominent, in this passage of the *Poetics* at least.⁷¹ This focus on *paideia* is typical both of Philostratus and of his age. It is the *pepaideumenoi* who “perceive not without *nous*”, and proper viewing, by implication, requires the sort of education which is the stated purpose of the *Imagines*. While then, the interpretive-mimetic faculty is natural (ἐκ φύσεως), it cannot function effectively on the majority of ancient art without education in myth.

Prior knowledge, both of ordinary objects and of the characters and events of myth, also functions as a kind of control on the free play of the mimetic faculty (τὸ μιμητικόν). Unlike a person admiring the goat-deer in the clouds, the viewer of an artwork interprets (ideally at least) as a member of a shared community of *paideia*, the community of “those who view not without *nous*”.⁷² The interpretive ideal combines the exercise of the mimetic faculty and the application of prior knowledge both of the world and of myth.

Unlike the section of the *Poetics* on which Philostratus is drawing, Apollonius’ and Damis’ discussion deals only with visual art and not with literature. The question arises then, whether these ideas can be applied to literary interpretation as well. For the most part they can be. While the examples used in proving the points cannot be directly applied to the written and spoken word (the cloud-figures, the colourless drawings), the two major conclusions, namely that the mimetic faculty is also active in interpreting art and that this is conditioned by prior knowledge of sensory objects and myth, are equally applicable to any mimetic art. If visual and verbal art function in similar ways, as Aristotle assumes in the *Poetics*⁷³ and as Philostratus himself does elsewhere,⁷⁴ then readers and listeners, like viewers, will play this active

As Lucas notes in his commentary on the *Poetics* (1968:73), “the figure recognized must in most cases have been a mythological one”.

⁷¹ The issue of knowledge of myth is, of course, raised elsewhere in the *Poetics*, for instance in the somewhat surprising claim that the traditional plots of tragedy are only known to a few (1451b25–26). It is not, though, so central a concern for Aristotle as it is in the *VA*.

⁷² Similarly in the *Imagines*, as Michel observes, the image without myth would remain only a source of naïve wonder (1974:458–459).

⁷³ Birmelin notes the connection of visual art and poetry already in Aristotle (1933:172).

⁷⁴ See, once again, the proem to the *Imagines*. Both arts, as Michel notes, describe and create the images of myth (1974:466). The interplay of verbal and visual art in the *Imagines* is far too complex to be discussed here. In addition to Elsner 1995 and 2000b, and Michel 1974 see also Beall 1993; Thein 2002; Schönberger 1995:157–175 and the introduction to Schönberger-Kalinka 1968; Leach 2000; Bryson 1994.

and (ideally for Philostratus) educated role in creating the meaning of a literary work. If this is the case, then this creative and educated role will be the one expected of readers of Philostratus' own works too, and it is in fact a fair description of the demands placed on readers by these allusive texts.

Before leaving the discussion of *mimêsis*, something must be said about the presentation of these ideas. The interpretation of interpretation, like that of more tangible objects, is presented by Philostratus as a dialogue. The Platonic precedent for the choice of dialogue form is clear, and is an important contribution, here and elsewhere, to the Socratic characterisation of the sage. As with the material derived from Aristotle, however, the use to which the material is put in the VA is not the same as in its original context. The pattern of incorrect interpretation by Damis followed by Apollonius' correction is present here as in the scenes discussed above, and with similar implications for the construction of Greek identity as essentially clear-sighted and philosophical. Furthermore, the choice of dialogue form can be seen to echo structurally the ideas which are put forward. We are told that interpretation is a creative process with borders set by *paideia*. The dialogue dramatises that same creative process and is generically defined within the same tradition of *paideia*. The form, in other words, exemplifies the content.⁷⁵

II. Phantasia

Corresponding to the discussion of *mimêsis* between Damis and Apollonius in Taxila is another dialogue in the second half of the VA dealing with *phantasia* (VI 19). In the latter debate, as in the former, Apollonius argues against a barbarian interlocutor about the nature of artistic production and reception. Both scenes follow the common pattern of an incorrect followed by a correct interpretation. Both discussions are carried out in terminology from Greek philosophical traditions, despite the exotic setting and characters. Both also contain an attempted *reductio ad absurdum* by one of the speakers, making reference to the gods. In the discussion of *mimêsis*, Apollonius ironically suggests to Damis that god is a painter (ζωγράφος οὖν ὁ θεός, II 22). In the later discussion of how the gods should be represented, Thespion responds to

⁷⁵ The choice of dialogue form is a relatively popular one among Second Sophistic authors: the dialogues of Lucian present a conspicuous example, as do the *Heroicus* and the Pseudo-Lucianic *Nero*.

Apollonius' defence of Greek anthropomorphism by asking whether Phidias or Praxiteles had gone to Olympus and seen the gods in order to represent them (VI 19), or whether some other influence guided their creation (ἢ ἕτερόν τι ἦν, ὃ ἐφίστη αὐτοὺς τῷ πλάττειν).

Thespiesion's question leads neatly into Apollonius' exposition of the nature and action of *phantasia*. This he describes as something full of wisdom (μεστόν γε σοφίας πρᾶγμα), and as a wiser craftsperson than *mimêsis* σοφώτερα μιμήσεως δημιουργός).⁷⁶ While *mimêsis*, he says, depicts what it has seen, *phantasia* depicts what it has not seen as well (μίμησις μὲν γὰρ δημιουργήσει, ὃ εἶδεν, φαντασία δὲ καὶ ὃ μὴ εἶδεν, VI 19). The καί, as Birmelin stresses, is important, indicating that *phantasia* depicts both what it has seen and what it has not.⁷⁷ Its sphere of operation both encompasses that of *mimêsis* and goes beyond it. How *phantasia* depicts what has not been seen is stated more fully in the following ("nicht leicht verständliche")⁷⁸ γάρ-clause: ὑποθήσεται γὰρ αὐτὸ πρὸς τὴν ἀναφορὰν τοῦ ὄντος, (VI 19). "It will present [its unseen object] by reference to what is". The major difficulty of this clause lies in the significance of τοῦ ὄντος. Birmelin takes this to mean what *phantasia* has already seen ("was sie schon sah"), so that *phantasia*, like *mimêsis* in the earlier theoretical discussion, produces images of what it has not seen by reference to what it has.⁷⁹ In interpreting this way, Birmelin argues against Schweitzer's translation of this phrase as "das wirklich Seiende".⁸⁰ Watson, however, translates similarly to Schweitzer ("by referring to the standard of the perfect reality"),⁸¹ seeing in the phrase "a deliberate echo of *Timaeus* 27e".⁸² Given the strong Platonic associations for the phrase τὸ ὄν, the growing dominance of Platonism in Philostratus' period and the popularity of the *Timaeus* in particular, it is difficult not to see a Platonic significance in the phrase here, and thus to follow the interpretation/translation of Schweitzer and Watson. *Phantasia* is then contrasted with *mimêsis* in a second respect: while shock can "knock out" *mimêsis* (μίμησιν μὲν πολλάκις

⁷⁶ Cf. the emphasis placed on the *sophia* of artists and painters in the proem to the *Imagines* and on this topic Michel 1974.

⁷⁷ Birmelin 1933:395. One might also translate 'even what it has not'.

⁷⁸ Birmelin 1933:396.

⁷⁹ Birmelin 1933:396.

⁸⁰ Schweitzer 2000:110; Birmelin 1933:396.

⁸¹ Watson 1994:4768.

⁸² Watson 1994:4792.

ἐκκρούει ἔκκληξιν), nothing can knock out *phantasia*, which proceeds undisturbed (ἀνέκκληκτος) to its goal.

In the contrast drawn here between *mimêsis* and *phantasia*, *mimêsis* takes on a more limited meaning than that which it was given in the earlier discussion dedicated to it. While in the earlier dialogue, *mimêsis* had produced representations of the possible as well as of actually existing things, it is limited here to what can be seen and can be imitated directly.⁸³ There was also no hint of its tendency to ἔκκληξιν in the earlier discussion, though the representation of the gods was not the primary focus. As in the earlier dialogue, however, both the process of creation on the part of the artist and the process of interpretation or reception of an image (or absence of an image) are discussed. Just as in the earlier scene Apollonius discussed the free play of *mimêsis*, using the example of viewing clouds, in the argument with Thespesion he argues that it would be better to have no image in a temple and to allow worshippers to form their own mental images of divinity, rather than to use theriomorphic images. Furthermore, this purely mental representation, he states, would be more powerful than artistic representation (ἀναγράφει γάρ τι ἡ γνώμη καὶ ἀνατυποῦται δημιουργίας κρεῖττον, VI 19). The Egyptians, he says, by representing the gods as animals, deprive them both of visual beauty and of symbolic suggestiveness (ὁμοῖς δὲ ἀφῆρησθε τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ τὸ ὁρᾶσθαι καλῶς καὶ τὸ ὑπονοεῖσθαι).

Both scenes, then, despite the differences and contradictions between them, show an interest in the purely internal functioning of the imaginative or image-making faculty. As Watson observes of the discussion of *phantasia*, there is a movement “from the praise of art which is based on mental vision to the exaltation of the mental vision itself, even if, or especially when, it does not issue in art.”⁸⁴ Despite the differences between the two dialogues, and whether the important faculty should be called *mimêsis* or *phantasia*, Philostratus/Apollonius is consistent in

⁸³ As Birmelin already observed (1933:399). Watson takes the “doubtful consistency of [Philostratus’] views on *mimêsis*” as indication of “importation without assimilation” (1994:4769). Inconsistency in itself is certainly not a strong argument for unoriginality, but given the similarity of Philostratus’/Apollonius’ theorising to views present in Cicero’s *Orator* in particular and to other earlier authors (see Watson 1994:4769–4784), the contradictions between the two dialogues offer some extra support for Watson’s conclusion. More recently, however, Verity Platt (forthcoming) has argued that the differences between these scenes should be read as a development of ideas rather than as simple contradiction.

⁸⁴ Watson 1994:4768.

stressing the active role of the viewer/interpreter, and the independence of the faculties involved, to the point that they are allowed to work even without a definite external object. Watson is again correct in seeing the connection between these ideas and Philostratus'/Apollonius' ranking of verbal over visual art in the comparison between the Zeus of Homer and of Phidias (IV 7). As a less 'earthbound' art, literature is considered superior to painting. It is "a product of the mind and not tied to material place or time."⁸⁵

Both dialogues also combine artistic and religious themes. This, of course, is not surprising, given the character of the text's protagonist and the religious purpose of the majority of ancient art.⁸⁶ It is also in keeping with the examples of visual art mentioned in the *VA* as a whole, which are most often of a religious nature. Apollonius is, after all, depicted as a visitor of temples and shrines rather than of galleries.⁸⁷ This emphasis on the viewing of religious objects influences the type of viewing which Apollonius is shown practising. While it was quite possible to apply realist/illusionist viewing to cult statues, as Pausanias demonstrates,⁸⁸ the natures of both object and viewer lead to a dominance of religious modes of viewing, in particular the symbolic.

In the text's theoretical passages, however, this type of viewing is barely mentioned, being suggested only in Apollonius' reference to the attributes with which the gods are depicted, such as the sky, seasons and stars by which Zeus is accompanied (VI 19). The scenes in which interpretation is represented show a different emphasis, more often leaning to the symbolic. In the *Imagines* similarly there is a discrepancy, though a different one, between viewing as theorised and viewing as practised. There, art is justified in the proem on the grounds of its ability to represent heroes and of its symmetry, through which it participates in *logos*. The paintings actually described in the course of the text deal with a great range of themes other than heroes, and are only occasionally praised for their symmetry, yet are still evidently regarded as worthy of the sophist-persona's interest and rhetoric. In both the *VA* and the *Imagines*, interpretive practice exceeds interpretive theory.

⁸⁵ Watson 1994:4769. On the image of Phidias in antiquity see Männlein-Robert 2003:45–67.

⁸⁶ For attempts to redress the neglect of religious and ritual elements in the modern study of ancient art, see Elsner 1996:515 and Gordon 1979.

⁸⁷ On the historical Apollonius and visiting shrines, see Bowie 1978:1688–1690.

⁸⁸ See Elsner 1996:522–523 on the coexistence of symbolic and realist modes of viewing.

In the discussion of *mimêsis* in particular, Apollonius outlines a type of viewing which sounds closer to that of the *Imagines* than that practised in the VA. The pleasure of viewing, as it is represented in this dialogue, lies in the action of a receptive *mimêsis* and in recognition of the object of the representation. This is much more like the type of viewing seen in the *Imagines* than the symbolic viewing typical of the VA. The interest apparent in the *Imagines* in the limits of realist viewing⁸⁹ does, moreover, also appear in the VA, in the story of the youth in love with the Cnidian Aphrodite (VI 40).⁹⁰ While the sophist-persona of the *Imagines* plays with the possibility of eliding the boundary between reality and representation, as for instance in his address to the figures in the painting in "Hunters" (*Imagines* 1.28), Apollonius, in the episode of the Cnidian Aphrodite, reinforces this same boundary, reforming the eyes of the Cnidians (ὁφθαλμοὺς...διορθώσομαι, VI 40).⁹¹ The error of the man who wishes to marry the statue of Aphrodite is an error of visibility. Apollonius, as a more skilled and stable interpreter and viewer, is able to correct him. Apollonius and the deluded Cnidan, however, share the view that the statue of a god is that god, and Apollonius' advice consequently focuses on the transgression of the boundary between human and divine rather than that between reality and representation. This same identification of divinity and image is evident in another of the Tyanean's rebukes, to a merchant who trades in statues (V 20). This is far removed from the sophist of the *Imagines* who can be (or pretend to be) misled by an image into thinking it is a reality, and quickly correct himself, making the 'mistake' part of the play of interpretation.

Conclusion: the interpretive ideal in the VA

Acuity of interpretation is a central part of the ideal embodied in the character of Apollonius. Through the foregrounding of interpretation, by

⁸⁹ See, for instance, the play with representation and reality in the description of Narcissus (*Imagines* 1.24). On Philostratus' play with the limits of representation: Elsner 1995:28–39.

⁹⁰ Bowie sees Philostratus' association of this story with Apollonius as "a *jeu d'esprit*" (1994:192), and indeed he can hardly have expected readers to take it as an event which actually happened to Apollonius. There may still, however, be more to the episode than just playfulness.

⁹¹ See also on this episode Gordon 1979:16–17.

the occasional suppression of interpretation and sometimes by leaving interpretive space for readers, the text invites its audience to emulate the protagonist as far as possible in the application of their own interpretive faculties. The passages in which interpretation is treated theoretically reflect this same hermeneutic interest. Apollonius' interpretations, despite their variety and the range of objects with which they are concerned, are characterised by a few main traits. They make reference to a broad context and tradition, in particular the traditions of Greek *paideia*, and they are free from fearful self-interest, a characteristic associated with barbarian characters by Philostratus as it is by Heliodorus.

As Whitmarsh has observed, the narratorial persona is assimilated to the subject, Apollonius.⁹² Through the text's cues to emulate the interpretive practices of Apollonius, readers too are urged to assimilate themselves to the protagonist. Given the *VA*'s hermeneutic self-consciousness and the detail with which it presents and implies an interpretive ideal, it is legitimate to consider what sort of reading of the text would be produced by applying to it its own interpretive cues.

An Apollonian Reading of the VA?

So how does the text invite its readers to approach it? Firstly and most importantly it encourages its readers to be active in their re-imagining and understanding of it. In the discussions of *mimêsis* and *phantasia*, despite the differences between the two dialogues, one striking point of commonality is the emphasis placed on the active role of the viewer or interpreter in understanding and appreciating the object of interpretation. Readers' own mimetic faculties must be active to experience the text. The dialogue on *mimêsis*, moreover, also suggested the necessity of prior knowledge for the understanding of mimetic art, and in particular knowledge of Greek tradition. This too is a requirement for readers of the *VA*, where both the narrating voice and characters within the text

⁹² 2004:424. See also 431: "Overall, the narrator presents himself as an enlightened, if unconventional, educator of young acolytes; and this is clearly another point of convergence between the narrator's representation of himself and of Apollonius". As Whitmarsh also observes (2004:433), readers are encouraged to resist astonishment (θαῦμα and ἔκπληξις). This is evidently related to the avoidance of fear in the interpretation of dreams and omens. The ideal interpreter should be unemotional in both instances. Here too there is a strong contrast with the *Imagines*, where the sophist-persona continually produces emotional and emotive readings of the images which he views, and reads himself into the pictures.

continually make allusions to Hellenic literature and history, generally with considerable subtlety. As Birmelin observes at the end of her discussion of Philostratan *mimêsis*, Philostratus sees aesthetic pleasure in a form of recognition/perception ("in einer Form der Erkenntnis").⁹³ Beyond simply recognising the characters and events evoked in the text, however, whether in the main narrative or obliquely in the form of forerunners and parallels, readers are expected to follow the integration of Apollonius into Hellenic tradition and his validation by means of that same tradition. Though Philostratus undoubtedly draws on Aristotle in the formation of the aesthetics represented in the VA, the text which he produces is quite different to anything Aristotle imagined.

The necessity of Hellenic *paideia* on the reader's part is accompanied by an invitation to adopt a Hellenic viewpoint on the world through which Apollonius moves. The interpretive processes of Apollonius as narrativised in the VA invariably operate within a Hellenic framework, and the interpretive processes of readers of the text itself must function similarly. Just as Apollonius brings to bear a variety of discourses (religious, literary, historical, 'art-historical'),⁹⁴ on the objects of interpretation, so readers are required to apply a similar range to the VA. Readers may not be able to emulate Apollonius by performing miracles or traveling to India to study with the Brahmins, but they can vicariously undertake his pilgrimage and emulate his interpretive skills, both by following the protagonist's interpretation and by interpreting Apollonius himself. Furthermore, given the way in which Philostratus/Apollonius privileges written texts over visual ones (IV 7), the written account of Apollonius' travels is presumably as superior to visual representations of the sage as the Zeus of Homer is to that of Phidias.

In so far as the hermeneutic cues to readers fall within the sphere of 'realistic' *mimêsis*, what is required of readers is relatively straightforward. As has often been observed, however, the arguments put forward in the VA concerning interpretation are not entirely consistent.⁹⁵ There is a tension between the accounts offered of *mimêsis* and *phantasia*, and the scenes where interpretation is presented in narrative form contain both a realist mode of viewing and a ritualistic or symbolic mode. These

⁹³ Birmelin 1933:180.

⁹⁴ On the danger of anachronism in assuming the existence of an ancient discourse of art history in the modern sense see Gordon 1979:7–8.

⁹⁵ For example Watson 1994:4769.

mixed interpretive cues raise several questions. Firstly, is the image of Apollonius to be understood as one created by *mimêsis* or by *phantasia*? That is, is it to be taken as a mimetic image of the 'real' Apollonius as far as Philostratus was able to represent him on the basis of his sources, or is it an image produced by *phantasia* "by referring to the standard of the perfect reality"?⁹⁶ Though *phantasia* is only discussed with reference to the production of images of the gods, the discussion does not rule out its application to an idealised figure of mortal origin. Furthermore Apollonius' divine nature as Proteus and the fact that he was given heroic honours also appear to qualify him for treatment by this faculty rather than by simple *mimêsis*.⁹⁷ The *Heroicus* also supports such an assumption, as the Phoenician claims to 'see' the heroes described by the Vinetender.⁹⁸

The question of whether to consider the *VA*'s portrait of Apollonius mimetic or phantastic returns us to one of the central and most discussed enigmas of this enigmatic text: the question of its status as fiction or biography. The same applies to the prompts to both realistic and symbolic reading. While the *VA* undoubtedly presents itself as a realistic representation of a particular life, displaying historiographical and biographical features,⁹⁹ it is also an idealising portrait, which at some points at least seems more suited to a symbolic than a realistic reading. It is not necessary, fortunately, to argue for one side of the realistic/symbolic or mimetic/phantastic dichotomies in approaching the text, any more than it is necessary to categorise it as either pure biography or a novelistic text. The mixed signals on how to interpret the text cannot be reconciled any more than the *VA* can be assigned to one genre. These mixed signals are an integral part of the work, and as Whitmarsh observes, the array of narrative techniques which it employs are there "precisely because the narrative sites itself in the midst of the complex battle to interpret the phenomenon of holy men".¹⁰⁰ Attempting

⁹⁶ Watson's translation of πρὸς τὴν ἀναφορὰν τοῦ ὄντος (VI 18; Watson 1994:4768).

⁹⁷ On Apollonius as hero see Jones 2004.

⁹⁸ Though the term *phantasia* is not used in the *Heroicus*, the act of mentally seeing an ideal which has not been physically perceived clearly fits the description of *phantasia* given by Apollonius.

⁹⁹ On the historiographic stance of the *VA*'s narrator see Bowie 1978:1652–1671; Whitmarsh 2004:424–430 and on the *VA* as "an exemplary portrait of an ideal life" Elsner 1997:22.

¹⁰⁰ Whitmarsh 2004:435.

to sketch an Apollonian reading of the text ends in a range of possible readings. Despite the dominance of Apollonius' interpretive voice, readers are left with a remarkable amount of freedom as to how they will approach the text, which of its hermeneutic cues they will follow, and the reading or readings to which this will lead.

IRONY VERSUS EULOGY.
THE *VITA APOLLONII* AS METABIOGRAPHICAL FICTION*

THOMAS SCHIRREN

The Ancient and the Modern Reader

Readers of the *Vita Apollonii* must take some time to follow the life of the hero, since along the way they are informed of many other curiosities which the narrator expounds with a certain *Fabulierlust*, as a 19th century German scholar would have remarked. Modern scholarship explains the extent of this material by reference to Flavius Philostratus' profession as a sophist in imperial Rome, in the circle of the Empress Julia Domna. As she is said to have had a special interest in rhetorically well composed texts (ῥητορικοὶ λόγοι, I 3), the reader should expect all the rhetorical versatility and refinement of a top sophist showing his art at its best. This sophistry, however, has also often caused feelings of ambivalence, as can be seen in the judgment of Eduard Meyer:

So bleibt sein [sc. Philostrats] Buch ein höfisch beeinflusstes journalistisches Machwerk, das mit allem Raffinement der sophistischen Kunst ausgestattet ist und durch Verbindung der auf das gebildete Publikum berechneten unterhaltenden und belehrenden Züge und des utopischen Reiseromans mit der philosophisch-theologischen Haupttendenz einen unbefriedigenden Mischcharakter erhält; im Grunde genommen ist es doch auch für ihn nur eine geistreiche Spielerei. Daher kann es auf einen tiefer empfindenden, wirklich religiös gestimmten Leser nur einen unerquicklichen Eindruck machen.¹

Meyer's construction of the ideal reader as a person of considerable piety draws our attention to an important point. He refers to the Christian tradition, in particular comparing the VA with the biography of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. This comparison has a long-standing ancient tradition: in the 3rd century CE a certain Hierocles wrote a

* I am very grateful that John Morgan did not hesitate to read my English manuscript diligently; it has much approved by his corrections. I also thank Nadia Koch for discussing matters of ancient art with me.

¹ Meyer 1924:188.

polemic treatise against Jesus Christ, in which he tried to exploit the Holy Man Apollonius as a weapon against the Christianity of his time. Although this treatise has not survived, we are broadly informed of its contents by the contemporary writer Eusebius, who vehemently tried to protect Jesus Christ against Hierocles' attack. His treatise *Against Hierocles* will be investigated at the end of this paper as a valuable source for the ancient reception of Philostratus' biography.

From a literary-critical point of view, the life of Jesus Christ as narrated in the New Testament is no more than a compilation of rather roughly composed texts, whose intention is not to delight the audience with a super-sophist's sayings and deeds, but to show the Son of God surpassing human suffering by subjecting himself to the evil of the world.² This sinless son bears all the sins of the world—without uttering a word against Pilate—and, paradoxically, becomes the saviour of this malevolent world.³ In contrast, Apollonius rises against the cruel rulers of the Roman empire; and, even after having been condemned to death for this scandalous conduct, still tries to educate the tyrants and finally disappears when it seems appropriate.⁴ He is as hard to catch physically as he is literarily with regard to his meaning as a symbolic figure. This is the central point of the following argument.

Some Remarkable Dissonances in the Récit

At the beginning of Apollonius' life we learn that he was descended from an old and rich family, his ancestors being the founders of his native town of Tyana. They were Greeks living in the middle of Asia Minor.

² For the Gospels and the Acts from the point of view of classical rhetoric see Burridge 1997 with the earlier literature; Kennedy 1984.

³ Still useful on the theology of the NT is Bultmann⁹ 1984:130–135.

⁴ VA VIII 5. Compare the pagan critic (Porphyry *Against the Christians* Fr. 63 Harnack 1916, Makarius 3, 1; for the authorship see T.D. Barnes, "Porphyry against the Christians. Date and the Attribution of Fragments", *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 24, 1973:424–442) τίνος ἕνεκεν ὁ Χριστὸς οὔτε τῷ ἀρχιερεὶ προσαχθεὶς οὔτε τῷ ἡγεμόνι ἄξιόν τι σοφοῦ καὶ θείου ἀνδρὸς ἐφθέγγετο, δυνάμενον καὶ τὸν κριτὴν καὶ τοὺς παρεστώτας παιδεῦσαι καὶ βελτίους ἐργάσασθαι, ἀλλ' ἡνέσχετο καλὰ μὲν τύπτεσθαι καὶ περιπτύεσθαι καὶ στεφανοῦσθαι ἀκάνθαις, καὶ μὴ καθάπερ Ἀπολλώνιος μετὰ παρρησίας τῷ αὐτοκράτορι λαλήσας Δομετιανῷ τῆς βασιλικῆς αὐλῆς ἀφανὴς ἐγένετο κτλ. For the pagans it is hard to understand why Jesus Christ did not seize the opportunity to give to the auditorium his advice for a better life. It is not the *passio Christi* (which is in accordance with the philosophical καρτερία) that is the problem, but the silence of Christ in the courtroom.

During her pregnancy his mother had a vision (τῇ μητρὶ φάσμα ἦλθεν), and asked the *phasma* what she would give birth to. It responded “To myself”, that is to none other than the proto-sophist Proteus. Here we are also able to hear the narrator’s voice, i.e. the authority responsible for which Genette calls the *narration*: in his apostrophe to the audience the narrator asks rhetorically whether anybody does not know this Proteus with all his cleverness,

elusive, now one person and now another, defying capture; and apparently possessed of all knowledge and fore-knowledge. And it is well to bear Proteus in mind, especially when the progress of the story shall display the man as superior to Proteus in prescience of coming events and undefeated in the most intricate and insoluble problems at the very moment when he seemed to be engaged in forlorn hope (I 4, transl. Phillimore).⁵

The apparently conventional reference to the Proteus of the *Odyssey*, though, is ambivalent. For there the god does not defy capture nor does he escape the hands of Menelaus and his companion, and his fore-knowledge is of a limited nature, as the unforeseen, successful attack of mortal beings demonstrates.⁶ So the modern reader raises the question whether the *phasma*’s prediction is appropriate to the hero’s biography. But, as if the narrator were realizing his error, he asserts that Apollonius is even more able to foresee than he himself in his earlier life. Needless to say, this too is impossible, if it is the case that Apollonius is supposed to be identical with Proteus the god. So it can be concluded that Apollonius is in fact a different identity or identical difference of Proteus. Thus the problem arises of whether the *phasma*’s prophecy is well chosen for a *theios aner* of this kind. For Plato associates the sophist in general with the identity-changing Proteus. As is well known, this is definitely not meant as a compliment.⁷ What therefore does the implied author have in mind here when he creates a super-protean hero? The reader remains puzzled.

Even reading on does not help the reader to solve the question of the hero’s identity; instead new enigmas arise: not far from Apollonius’ birthplace there was a spring of miraculously cold boiling water.

⁵ For Proteus in the ancient tradition see Fuhrer 2004.

⁶ *Odyssey* IV 370–570.

⁷ Cf. Symposium 203d; Euthydemus 288b; Sophist 234e; 235a; Politicus 291c; cf. Burkert 1962a:41n26; 50n70–71.

Ἔστι δέ τι περὶ Τύανα ὕδωρ Ὀρκίου Διός, ὥς φασι, καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸ Ἀσβαμίον, οὗ πηγή ἀναδίδεται ψυχρά, παφλάζει δέ, ὥσπερ ὁ θερμαινόμενος λέβης. τοῦτο εὐόρκους μὲν ἱλεών τε καὶ ἡδὺ ὕδωρ, ἐπιόρκους δὲ παρὰ πόδας ἡ δίκη· ἀποσκήπτει γάρ καὶ ἐς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ ἐς χεῖρας καὶ ἐς πόδας, καὶ ὑδέροις ἀλίσκονται καὶ φθόαις, καὶ οὐδ' ἀπελθεῖν δυνατόν, ἀλλ' αὐτόθι ἔχονται καὶ ὀλοφύρονται πρὸς τῷ ὕδατι ὁμολογοῦντες ἃ ἐπιώρκησαν·

Now there is near Tyana a well sacred to Zeus, the god of oaths, so they say, and they call it the well of Asbama. Here a spring rises cold, but bubbles up like a boiling couldron. This water is favourable and sweet to those who keep their oaths, but to perjurers it brings hot-footed justice; for it attacks their eyes and hands and feet, and they fall the prey of dropsy and wasting disease; and they are not even able to go away, but are held on the spot and bemoan themselves at the edge of the spring, acknowledging their perjuries (I 6, transl. Conybeare).

Why is this spring described in such detail? One may suggest that there is a certain relation to the story told by the narrator, the *récit*, as Genette calls it.⁸ Perhaps the narrator wants to confirm his reliability right at the beginning of his work to make the reader trust him throughout the whole book. But we may hesitate to give him our full confidence. Someone who has to emphasize his reliability so strongly might appear less trustworthy to us, and the more he insists the more we hesitate to trust him.⁹

At this stage of the *récit* a strong confirmation appears overdone to the reader, and raises the question of whether it should be understood as a signal of irony. This conclusion was drawn by scholars investigating the problem of irony, especially Wayne C. Booth, who developed the concept of stable irony.¹⁰ In this perspective the figure of Damis in particular is of high interest. The narrator tells us that it was the Empress Julia Domna who commissioned him to write the biography, obviously intending to liberate Apollonius' image from prejudices concerning his sophistry and wizardry. Among the sources mentioned by the narrator are the hero's letters, the stories told about him, the authors Maximus of Tyre and Moeragenes, and finally the *deltoi* of his companion Damis. Apollonius had discovered this apprentice in Old Niniveh on his journey

⁸ Genette 1972:esp. 71–76.

⁹ This is the well known device of a 'Beglaubigungsapparat', cf. Warning 1983; Iser 1991:35.

¹⁰ Booth 1974.

to the East, and Damis followed him until his teacher died, or better, disappeared.

This ‘*Eckermann*’, as Fritz Graf named him,¹¹ is an ideal source because his *deltoi* contain accounts of the Sage’s travels (which he claims to have shared), his maxims, his discourses and his prophecies. But how many of these *deltoi* did Damis need? I imagine that quite a retinue was required to transport hundreds of wooden tablets during the journeys of the sage, like the outside broadcast trucks today when a soccer game takes place or a pop star goes on stage in a concert. However, the skilled narrator tells us that he found a detailed account of all the words and deeds of the hero in Damis’ collection of *deltoi*; and since Damis was not able to write a treatise of a high stylistic niveau himself, Philostratus the sophist was engaged to transcribe and edit these documents.

μετέχοντι δέ μοι τοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν κύκλου—καὶ γὰρ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς πάντας λόγους ἐπὶναι καὶ ἡσπάζετο—μεταγράψαι τε προσέταξε τὰς διατριβὰς ταύτας καὶ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας αὐτῶν ἐπιμεληθῆναι, τῷ γὰρ Νινίῳ σαφῶς μὲν, οὐ μὴν δεξιῶς γε ἀπηγγέλλετο.

Since I was a member of her salon (for she admired and encouraged all rhetorical discourse), she set me to transcribe these works of Damis and to take care over their style, since the style of the man from Ninos was clear but rather unskillful (I 3, transl. Jones).

I would like to stress the ambiguous use of some words: first of all μεταγράψαι. Literally this means “to change things during the process of writing.”¹² There is further evidence to this effect when we hear that the narrator is working on the ἀπαγγελία: that could mean to correct the *lexis* only, but the following verb ἀπηγγέλλετο does not necessarily corroborate this, so we can conclude that the narrator wants to emphasize the alterations he made in Damis’ *récit*. This is of some interest for our problem of reliability. In those cases where Damis reported something not in the right manner (δεξιῶς), then our court sophist would go so far as to alter the facts in order to fulfill the task set him by the empress.¹³

But let us examine the product of such sophistry, the narration itself. After reading several episodes of Philostratus’ biography one may

¹¹ Graf 1984/5:66.

¹² Cf. Diogenes Laërtius VIII 85 and Schirren 2005:46n99.

¹³ Of course, a well-known parallel to Damis’ *deltoi* can be found in the Dictys narrative, where the discovery of long missing volumes functions as a sign of fictionality: Dictys Cretensis 1; Speyer 1974.

wonder why scholars have so seldom noticed elements of contradiction, discrepancy, even humor, and why they have, on the contrary, tended to take the narrative seriously. The following paragraphs will give some examples of strange elements of this kind.

1. Apollonius' victory over the *empusa* of Corinth is one of his most famous deeds, as the narrator insists (IV 25). One of the disciples of the Cynic philosopher Demetrius had fallen in love with a young lady, who in truth was a disguised *empusa* demon. After revealing this fake, Apollonius makes all the goods the demon had brought into the young man's house disappear. For they were not *materia* but only the illusion of *materia* (οὐ γὰρ ὕλη ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ ὕλης δόξα). Previously the holy man had visited the young philosopher and watched him thoroughly like a painter painting a portrait (ἀνδριαντοποιοῦ δίκην ἐς τὸν Μένιππον βλέπων ἐζωγράφει τὸν νεανίαν καὶ ἐθεώρει). Here there is a trace of a discourse which we will discuss at length when we deal with the important concepts of mimesis and *phantasia* within the narrative. In this context we are only aware of a metaphor that does not really fit the subject; this leads us to recognize some comical aspects in the little story. Whereas normally young men ruin themselves financially when captivated by a femme fatale, this man acquires valuables, while the demon eats his flesh. We know a similar story from Menander's play *Phasma*, where the false demon turns out to be a girl. Here in the VA the case is turned around. Other related *topoi* can be found, for example the Heracles of Prodicus, mentioned by Antisthenes in his *Small Heracles* discussing the question of *hedone* and *ponos*.¹⁴ With *topoi* and reminiscences of this kind the horrible tale of the demon is made highly literary. The *tremendum* decreases, laughter arises.

2. Another tale of rising laughter is told in IV 20:

When he was speaking of libations, there happened to be present at the lecture a young dandy of such dissolute manners that his name was a byword on every stage-on-wheels in the country fairs. He came from Corcyra, and traced his descent from Alcinous the Phaeacian, Odysseus' host. Well, Apollonius was talking of libations, and saying that we ought not to drink of this cup, but keep it for the gods unsullied and undrunk-of. When he went on to prescribe that the cup should have ears, and 'libation

¹⁴ Xenophon *Memorabilia* 2, 1, 22–34.

be made by the ear' (the part where men never, by any chance, drink), the young gentleman shocked the lecture with a douche of loud indecent laughter. Apollonius looked up at him and said, "this is not you that are so ill-mannered, but the devil by which you are ridden unawares." ... When Apollonius looked at him, the idol uttered cries of alarm and rage, such as burst from those who suffer fire and the rack; it swore to quit the youth and never again take possession of any man. Apollonius then spoke angrily to it as one would speak to a shifty, impudent rascal of a slave, and commanded it to come out with a sign; whereupon it said, "I will overthrow such and such a statue," indicating one of those which stand round the Stoa Basileios ... The statue first stirred slightly, and then fell. The tumult, the amazement, the applause were indescribable. (transl. Philimore)

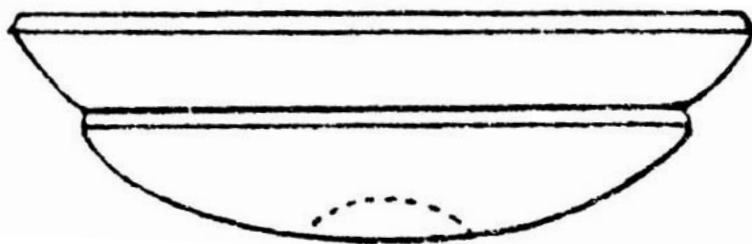


Fig. 1. Phiale.

The young dandy is one of the descendants of Alcinous, of whom Horace said that they spent more time in taking care of their skin than was appropriate.¹⁵ Firstly, we have to ask whether the laughter is really as demonic as the narrator alleges. Secondly, in posing this question we have to investigate the ritual of libation. When discussing this subject, Apollonius tells the others to pour the libation over the ears of the libation cup. But as we know from our archaeological evidence those cups, the *phialai* for example, did not have ears at all, but were intended to be held from beneath.¹⁶

So, our sage demands that ears should be added to the usually earless cup, in order to keep it away from mortal lips, whereas the *phiale* serves the gods alone and was never intended to be touched by mortal lips. This argument is strange, so in the laughter of the dandy we can recognize the laughter of any contemporary Greek or Roman given

¹⁵ Horace 1, 2, 28–31.

¹⁶ Schirren 2005:229 with n. 61.

such odd advice.¹⁷ Also the final applause of the audience is not an appropriate response to a tremendous wizard, but is a typical reaction to a sophist's *epideixis* or trick.

The presumption against an 'innocent' reading of this passage grows when we remind ourselves of the discussion about drinking pots in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists* 11. Reminiscences of this kind let the hero's lecture on the right form of libation slip slightly into a learned entertainment for symposiasts. The laughter of the young gentlemen can be read as a sign of this, since it is a well known fact since Plato's dialogues that symposiasts are in the habit of interrupting the speaker by their laughter.¹⁸

3. With similar amusement we read the story of a young man possessed by a homoerotic demon who is both an εἰρων and a ψεύστης (III 38). Although we are told that Iarchas, the chief of the Indian gymnosophists, wrote an epistle against such unseemly conduct, the implied reader wonders whether the word εἰρων could be a sly signal directed to him not to take these exorcism tales too seriously, since they are products of another ψεύστης, the author himself.

4. Apollonius is able to convert a satyr from a sex killer preying on women into a modest and lovely forest demon (VI 27) by pouring some 100 liters of wine into a drinking trough. Indeed, the demon turns invisible, and the wine disappears under the eyes of the shocked people. Then Apollonius says:

“σπεισώμεθα” ἔφη “τῷ σατύρῳ, καθεύδει γάρ.” καὶ εἰπὼν ταῦτα ἡγεῖτο τοῖς κομήταις ἐς Νυμφῶν ἄντρον, πλέθρον οὕπω ἀπέχον τῆς κόμης, ἐν ᾧ καθεύδοντα δείξας αὐτὸν...

“Let us make a truce with the satyr, now that he is asleep.” So saying, he led the villagers to a cave of Nymphs, less than a furlong from the village, and showed them the satyr sleeping there (VI 27, transl. Jones).

In this context the sleeping satyr is reminiscent of a type we know as the Barberini satyr, a Greek marble figure from Rome.

¹⁷ Cf. also Porphyry *Vita Pythagorae* 42 and Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 84; both are unable to understand the Pythagorean rule. Porphyry suggests that music is meant because it comes through the ears (κατὰ τὸ οὖς). Either the narrator is joking about the rule formulated in the lost *περὶ θυσίων* of Apollonius or the later writers have taken the rule from the VA without understanding the irony.

¹⁸ Athenaeus 99e; 156c; 159f; Plato *Symposium* 222c.



Fig. 2. Faun.

So the sage is not only showing the power of his δαίμονία κίνησις but is also alluding to a famous statue: the sleeping satyr in the grotto (V 12). Instead of being shocked by a *tremendum* once more the reader slips into an art experience. But there remain other oddities. Midas, of whom Apollonius speaks further on, captured a satyr with wine which made the sleeping satyr recover his senses (σωφρονεῖν).¹⁹ This is odd, because we know drunken satyrs as common participants in mythical drinking parties where they usually do not act sensibly. All we can do is to confirm that the idea of a satyr coming to its senses by drinking wine is paradoxical.²⁰

5. The death of a philosopher is the culminating point of his life. Here he shows his disciples and others how deeply his dogma is rooted in his physical existence. Lucian's *Life of Peregrinus* demonstrates how a sarcastic narrator might represent a would-be philosopher in the very moment of his death, on a pyre piled up and ignited by his own hand. *Nota bene*: we are told of this Peregrinus by the narrator that he also was a Proteus due to his ever changing image, until he turned to fire because of his desire for glory.²¹ So, to say the least, the Protean Apollonius stands in a somewhat delicate tradition.

When Apollonius was a prisoner and was to be brought before the Emperor Domitian, our hero said to Damis:

You appear to me, Damis, to be unready for death, even though you have been with me for a while, studying philosophy from your youth. I thought you were ready for it, and knew all the tactics I command. Just as fighters and heavy-armed soldiers need not only courage, but also the tactical skill that perceives the crisis of a battle, so also philosophers must watch for the crisis at which they will die, so that they may not advance towards it in a disorderly or suicidal manner, but with perfect judgment. I have chosen to die in the best way and at the moment suitable for a philosopher, if someone wishes to kill me. I have explained this to others in your presence, and am tired of teaching it to you in particular (VII 31, transl. Jones).

We learn that Apollonius is aware of the delicacy of the situation when a philosopher comes to the end of his life. He does not approach death

¹⁹ For the art experience compare the picture in Philostratus *Imagines* I 22; "The satyr is asleep; let us speak of him with bated breath; lest he wake and spoil the scene before us."

²⁰ Schirren 2005:222–226.

²¹ Lucianus *De morte Peregrini* 55, 1; Schirren 2005:50.

roughly and toughly like the Stoic opposition, or the Christians, but applies a special *technē* of choosing the best moment, the *kairos*. The best moment for what? For an event worthy of a philosopher. This is to say, he chooses a death that lets the glory of his philosophy shine upon him. So, when our Apollonius was an old man, he one day bade his Eckermann to bring a letter to Rome; but as Damis recognized later this task was a mere pretext to another goal: “And what was the Master’s stratagem? Throughout his life, they say, Apollonius often made his pronouncement: ‘Live unobserved, but if you cannot, leave this life unobserved’” (VIII 28, transl. Jones).²² This is part of the famous Epicurean dictum λάθε βιώσας.²³ But the second maxim, the λάθε ἀποβιώσας, is a strange one for a sage who has spent all his life on the stage of active Pythagoreanism. However, the life-long Eckermann says farewell to his master and the narrator comments:

The account of Apollonius of Tyana given by Damis the Assyrian ends with these words. As for the manner of his death, if he did die, there are many versions, though none given by Damis. I, however, must not leave this item out, for my account surely must have its proper ending (VIII 29, transl. Jones).

The Greek wording is sophisticated: δεῖ γάρ που τὸν λόγον ἔχειν τὸ ἐαυτοῦ πέρας. The narrator confesses that he is concerned to have an appropriate ending, and he does not seem too bothered about the sources. A philosopher’s life without an appropriate ending seems unacceptable to the narrator. Here we have a clear reference to the act of narration, the authority that enables the narrator to reflect upon his strategies. So these remarks can be considered as significant evidence for how the narrator treats his material. After a short report of two other versions of Apollonius’ death, the narrator expands upon this subject by telling the story of the apotheosis in the temple of Dictynna at Crete.²⁴ What causes perplexity is the narrator’s insistence that Apollonius called those who bound him ὡς μὴ λάθοι, whereas in accordance with his maxim he had undertaken to die in secret. And indeed the narrative seems designed to provide eyewitness testimony in order to propagate the story of the apotheosis, just as Lucian’s Peregrinus wanted

²² Schirren 2005:306.

²³ Epicurus Fr. 8. Usener.

²⁴ It is interesting that Photius does not mention this end of the hero; he tells us that Apollonius’ death was invisible and that therefore there existed divergent versions about it. That is, in Photius’ opinion, what Apollonius intended (*Bibliothēke* 9b 25ff., Cod. 44, Bekker).

to attract publicity when he jumped into the fire just after the Olympic games had ended. There are even similarities of wording: the virgins of Dictynna are singing *στεῖχε γᾶς, στεῖχε ἐς οὐρανόν, στεῖχε*; Lucian's text has *ἔλιπον γᾶν, βαίνω ἐς Ὀλυμπον*. And if this is an intertextual device, then it might be no coincidence that the Protean, uncatchable Apollonius is elevated to heaven from a sanctuary which is devoted to a goddess of webs and hunting (with nets).²⁵ So, at the very end of his life on earth, Apollonius is not the sage, but the sophistic wizard who escapes all the snares and nets with which suspicious hunters try to capture and bind him. To make it clear: this boundless being contradicts the common *façon d'être* of a philosopher whose deeds and actions are a solid paradigm for the helpless majority of mankind.

The afterlife of Apollonius is similarly perplexing. Once one of his disciples was not able to believe that the soul stays alive after the body's death; Apollonius appeared to the skeptical young man in a dream, uttering this poem:

ἀθάνατος ψυχὴ καὶ χρῆμα σόν, ἀλλὰ προνοίης,
ἢ μετὰ σῶμα μαρανθέν, ἅτ' ἐκ δεσμῶν θεοῦ ἵππος,
ῥηιδίως προθοροῦσα κεράννυται ἥερι κούφῳ,
δεινὴν καὶ πολὺτλητον ἀποστέρξασα λατρεῖν·
σοὶ δὲ τί τῶνδ' ὄφελος, ὅ ποτ' οὐκέτ' ἐὼν τότε δόξεις;
ἢ τί μετὰ ζῳοῖσιν ἐὼν περὶ τῶνδε ματεύεις;

Immortal is the soul, and is not yours
But Providence's. When the body wastes,
The soul starts like a racehorse from the gate,
And nimbly leaping mingles with light air,
Hating its fearful, heavy servitude.
For you, what use is this? When you're no more
You will believe it: why then while alive
Pry uselessly into such hidden things? (VIII 31, transl. Jones)

We would have expected a Pythagorean dogma about metempsychosis here or even the dogma that the soul will be elevated to the ether,²⁶ but if the soul vanishes mingling with the all-surrounding air, then a specifically Epicurean ring is audible,²⁷ which is strange in a Pythagorean context like this. If existence really vanished, as the Epicureans believed,

²⁵ Der Kleine Pauly 2, 27–29 s.v. Dictynna.

²⁶ Burkert 1962b:335–347. From VA I 7 and III 34 it is clear that the narrator knows about these Pythagorean beliefs.

²⁷ Epicurus Fr. 315 Usener; the air as element of the soul in Epicurean thought appears in Lucretius 3, 456–457.

then it would make sense to say “when you are no more,” but in that state it would be impossible to believe in anything. It also surprises the reader that although the sage was not sparing with statements and affirmations about the soul during his life, we are told here that such enquiries are of no use at all. And why should there be only δόξα whereas we would expect the ultimate expression γνώσις? Therefore, I would prefer to translate verse 5 as follows: “But what use is there for you in the words that seem right for you when you are no more?” After death there exists a *doxa*, but no subject. A strange paradox at the end of the VA.

6. There remain other oddities in the *récit*. At the grave of Palamedes, for example, Apollonius prays to Palamedes the proto-sophist whom he had already met, reincarnated as an angry young man (III 22). In the latter passage Iarchas and Apollonius talk about their various reincarnations, and therefore, instead of asking homERICALLY “τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν”, the heroes welcome each other with “ὅστις ἦσθα”. So the aspect of ἦθος, which characterizes biography as a genre, is extended to a multiplicity of lives here—not without some comic effect.²⁸

7. Finally, at the tomb of Achilles the terrifying encounter with the giant shape of the hero develops into a philological conversation about some πολυθρύλητα of ancient Homeric philology, quite similar to Lucian’s *Verae Historiae* 20.²⁹

The Problem of Irony within a Eulogy

“If the reader is reading properly,” says Wayne C. Booth, “he is unable to escape recognizing either some incongruity among the words or between the words and something else that he knows.”³⁰ How, then, should we explain such dissonances? Is the author “foolish enough not to see that his statement cannot be accepted as it stands?”, Booth asks; so we must investigate whether the author means something different from the literal sense of what he has written. “The reader is asked simply to move from one platform [...] to another, but perhaps the implied intellectual motion is really downward, going beneath the surface.”

²⁸ See Schirren 2005:270–271.

²⁹ VA IV 16, cf. Schirren 2005:299–305.

³⁰ Booth 1974:10.

For, Booth continues, “whenever a story, play, poem or essay reveals what we accept as a fact and then contradicts it, we have only two possibilities. Either the author has been careless or he has presented us with an inescapable ironic invitation.”³¹ In the case of Philostratus, I would rather vote for the ironic invitation than for assuming a careless author, because the number of discrepancies is too large to be explained by carelessness.

But now we are in a difficult position. The narrator is clear enough about his intention in writing the biography:

I have therefore decided to remedy the general ignorance and to give an accurate account of the Master, observing the chronology of his words and acts, and the special character of his wisdom by which he came close to being thought possessed and inspired (I 2, transl. Jones).

It is not far-fetched to suppose that this intention was part of the task imposed on Philostratus by the Empress, whose official words I mentioned above. That is to say, the real author was commissioned to write a eulogy as, at first sight, he seems to have done. What is the intended or, as Booth says, the reconstructed meaning of the VA, once we become aware of the irony? I will offer a rather sophistic solution. Philostratus of Athens, one of the top sophists of his time, seems to have constructed two levels of meaning. One for fulfilling the Empress’s task, the other for amusing those who prefer to reflect about supermen in general than to believe in one of them exclusively. What, then, is meant by “to remedy the general ignorance” (μὴ περιδεῖν τὴν τῶν πολλῶν ἄγνοιαν) and to “observe the special character of his wisdom” (ἐξακριβῶσαι τὸν ἄνδρα . . . , τοῖς τε τῆς σοφίας τρόποις, ὅφ’ ὧν ἔψαυσε τοῦ δαιμόνιός τε καὶ θεῖος νομισθῆναι)? In my opinion much in this text is ambiguous. This is the reason why we find discrepancies especially among those actions and situations where our hero is on his best wizardly form. So the reflecting, sophisticated reader experiences something akin to the Wittgensteinian scheme of duck and rabbit.

The irony will therefore not completely annul the ostensible meaning, but allows the reader to switch between two divergent views. Or as Wittgenstein comments upon his famous figure: “Und ich muß zwischen dem ‘stetigen Sehen eines Aspekts’ und dem ‘Aufleuchten eines Aspekts’ unterscheiden.”³² And Booth adds:

³¹ Booth 1974:61.

³² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, Schriften 1 (1969) 504.

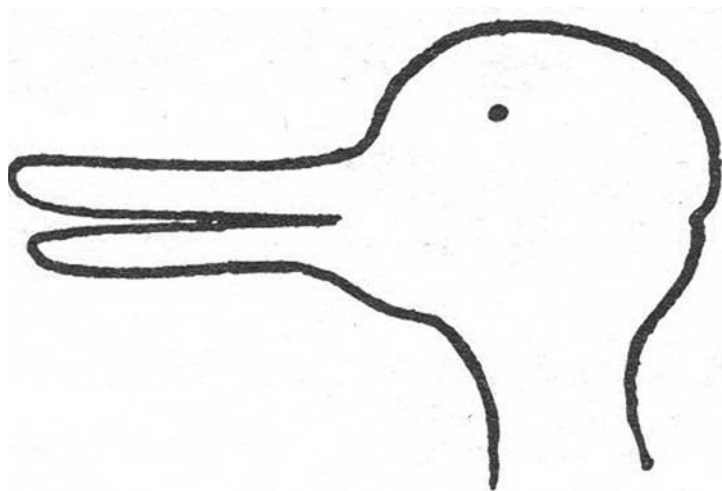


Fig. 3. Duck or rabbit?

We must also admit the painful fact that some persons must be born with mental equipment below the threshold required for recognizing the ironic invitation. It must be, however, a fairly low threshold, because anyone who can develop a pattern of expectations, and then recognize that it has been falsely suggested and then violated, can recognize irony (Booth 1974:226).

*Some Suggestions about the Author's Voice Or:
What "Meaning" can mean*

However, one might wish for further support in identifying the rather theoretical and complex concept of stable irony in the VA. Particularly attractive in this regard is a passage which was noticed as early as 1637 by Franciscus Junius³³ and again by theorists like Ernst Gombrich³⁴ and Wolfgang Iser³⁵ but, so it seems, has been overlooked by philologists interpreting the narrative: the art-theoretical discourse on mimesis and *phantasia* in II 21–22 and VI 19. Here Apollonius develops a new theory of how *phantasia* is necessary for understanding, or better: what role *phantasia* plays in semanticizing. For generating the meaning of a picture

³³ Franciscus Junius, *De pictura veterum* (1637).

³⁴ Gombrich 2002:154–155.

³⁵ Iser 1991:486–487.

we use our individual *phantasia* to create a meaningful picture from the sensible data we receive. The situation in which this theory is developed is an interesting one. In II 20 Apollonius examines the relief pictures of Porus the Indian in the fictitious Parthenon of Taxila. And because these pictures are said to be similar to the best pictures of a Zeuxis, Polygnotus or Euphranor they are *mimemata* in an art-theoretical sense. The process of semanticizing is evident here, since we are dealing with metal reliefs whose colors differ from our normal experience: although the blood for example is gold, not red, the viewer nevertheless perceives it as blood and therefore identifies persons as wounded.

Plato, especially in the *Sophist* and the *Republic*, criticizes painting with foreshortenings for changing the ontological structure of being so that young people lacking experience of what really is the case could be misled.³⁶ And it is the sophist who deceives people by managing his products according to the *doxa* of the recipients. By doing so he gives his signs a surface which will be accepted at face value, though by this trick he in fact seduces the audience for his own purposes, once having changed the structure of being.

Let us now try to apply this theory to our narrator or implied author giving hints with ironical signs. If the reader has to use his own *phantasia* to understand what he reads because all *mimemata* are only understandable by the recipient's supplementation, then the implied author could be free to switch between two diametrically opposed positions. On the one hand he is a narrator of a sage's life with all the typical elements of fantasy, on the other hand he is reflecting on the superman's biography by asserting discrepancies in order to expose the credulity of some other readers. So we can conclude that he takes the disposition of the various types of readers into account, forming the narrative in accordance to the various *doxai*.

This leads us to the explanation of the subtitle of this paper, "The VA as Metabiographical Fiction". In my opinion the art-theoretical digression mentioned above offers the key for understanding Philostratus' motive for describing this eccentric life. It shows how in each work of art the predisposition of the recipient governs the process of receiving so that he sees and hears only what he is already disposed for; therefore we all live in a world of constructions or, platonically spoken, of δόξαι, and we reach truth—if ever—only by respecting these limits. As long

³⁶ Plato *Republic* X; *Sophist* 236a–e.

as artists are able to create a world following the perspective of mortal beings, their works will be called true according to the *condicio humana*. Works like these become truth because they reflect the limits of our perception. We see what we see only with the eye of our *doxa*, or as Gombrich puts it: "Making comes before matching." And Philostratus goes one step further by expounding two perspectives: the superman and his partial deconstruction as well.

Eusebius' Criticism of Apollonius

Having followed the main points of my reading of the VA, some readers may ask whether the methods of modern theorists like Goodman or Gombrich are appropriate for interpreting a biographer of the third century CE. To these readers I would like to present an ancient source, Eusebius' *Contra Hieroclem*, which comes astonishingly near to our modern point of view concerning the discrepancies of the VA.

In spite of the fact that this source has been edited and translated together with the VA itself,³⁷ it has remained neglected among scholars interested in the VA or early Christianity.³⁸ It is the answer to Hierocles Sossianus' comparison of the Philostratean Apollonius with Jesus Christ (of the gospels), written about 300 CE. and now lost. The extant answer was written by a certain Eusebius, long identified with the famous bishop of Palestinian Caesarea;³⁹ however, the style and manner of writing of this treatise differ strongly from the Christian *Demonstratio* and *Praeparatio evangelica*.⁴⁰ Operating with several ironical hints, our source has a more sophisticated effect. Scholars who ascribe the work

³⁷ Kayser 1870:369–413; Conybeare 1912:484–605. The new edition is that of É. des Places. From this edition I take the numbers of chapters and lines (which are identical to Kayser's edition but not completely to Conybeare's translation, which I will use when quoting the *CH* in English). It is dated either before the persecution of the Christians began in 303 (von Harnack 1904:118) or after in summer 313 (Schwartz RE 6, 1909:1394).

³⁸ For example Barnes 1976:239: "To be sure, its few readers must find the writing dreary and pedestrian, and the bulk of the treatise consists of a somewhat wearisome examination and criticism of specific episodes or passages in the Life of Apollonius." However, what may scare off modern readers renders the text useful for the present discussion.

³⁹ Doubts on this authorship are expressed by Hägg 1992; arguing for the traditional view, but in my opinion not convincingly, Borzi 2003. In the following I name the author Eusebius without fixing his identity to the Christian from Caesarea.

⁴⁰ Hägg 1992:147–150.

to Eusebius of Caesarea explain these sophistries as adaptations to the style of the object of criticism, Philostratus himself. I consider this explanation inappropriate, because the writer vehemently disapproves of the sophistic author of the *VA*. Further investigation is needed.

Eusebius' judgement is definitely not impartial and well-considered, since a polemic tone can be noticed from the very first words:

So then, my dear friend, you find worthy of no little admiration the parallel this writer has paradoxically drawn between the man of Tyana and our own Saviour and teacher (*CH* 1).

For the critic his own Saviour's rank is, without a shadow of doubt, not only far beyond the Greek sophist, but also simply incomparable with that of any other human being. He feels the more confident in writing his apotreptic essay, because he is aware that important aspects of the treatise he is attacking have already been refuted by other Christians. First of all he criticizes Hierocles for stealing his arguments from other authors; in his opinion they have "been pilfered in the most shameless manner, not only I may say in respect of their ideas, but even of their words and syllables, from other authorities"; authorities who had already been refuted by men like Origen who wrote against Celsus.⁴¹

Even though Eusebius is clear enough in his intention to prove that Jesus Christ is the true and only saviour of the world, he is aware that pagans had similar hopes of Apollonius. This is why Hierocles had written a σύγκρισις of the two heroes. This technical term is reminiscent of Plutarch's biographies and their method of comparing an outstanding Greek statesman or strategist with a Roman. For Plutarch this is a literary form to give both Roman and Greek readers an impression of the men they produced, aiming at giving both cultures equal esteem; on the contrary, Hierocles' goal is to define differences between religious cultures: Jesus Christ is no more than a product of Christian credulity, whereas in the case of Apollonius the pagan view is much more authentic and trustworthy:

Let us note however how much better and more sensible is the view which we take of such matters, and explain the conception which we entertain of men gifted with remarkable powers (*CH* 2, 8–10).

⁴¹ Scholars remark that one of the authorities Hierocles has 'pilfered' is Porphyry's *Against the Christians*, see Barnes 1994 and Junod 1988.

After listing all the miraculous deeds of Apollonius, probably in the form Philostratus gives them to us in the *VA*, Hierocles concludes:

What then is my reason for mentioning these facts? It was in order that you may be able to contrast our own accurate and well established judgment on each point, with the easy credulity of the Christians. For whereas we reckon him who wrought such feats not a god, but only a man pleasing the gods, they on the strength of a few miracles proclaim their Jesus a god (*CH* 2, 18–23).

So, the question is in a way one of method, the problem of the reliability of the sources used. We will see that in the critic's opinion the question whether Apollonius is a god or not is not easy to answer from the *récit* of the *VA*, since there are various voices audible.

This is the deeper reason why the author of the treatise against Hierocles' φιλαλήθης λόγος⁴² is not defending Christian doctrine but only examining the *VA* as a reliable source for a superhuman sage. "So we will merely examine the work of Philostratus, and by close scrutiny of it show that Apollonius was not fit to be classed, I will not say among philosophers, but even among men of integrity and good sense, much less compared with our Saviour Christ" (*CH* 4, 4, 28–32). From this point of view the pagans will turn out to be even more credulous than the simple minded Christians. So the aim of the treatise is in a sense similar to my search for ironical signs, although one may doubt whether the ancient Christian would have noticed an intended ironical meaning in the *VA*. But let us examine the treatise itself.

The author starts his list of errors by going through each of the eight books of the *VA*. He stresses that he regards "the man of Tyana as having been, humanly speaking, a kind of sage" ... and "if anyone wishes to class him with any philosopher you like, and to forget all the legends about him and not bore me with them," he could be quite agreeable. There are superhuman powers and magical actions which render Apollonius an improbable product of fiction:

[However I am not in agreement] if anyone ventures, whether he be Damis the Assyrian, or Philostratus, or any other compiler or chronicler, to overleap the bounds of humanity and transcend philosophy, and while

⁴² Eusebius speaks of φιλαλήθης (λόγος) only in the singular (*CH* 1, 4; 1, 12; 1, 19; 2, 33), whereas Speyer assumes in *RAC* 15, 1991:104–107 that there was a first edition in two books and a second one which our Eusebius read, containing only one book. Hägg 1992:143 insists on the evidence of only one edition in two books.

repelling the charge of wizardry in word, yet to bind it in act rather than in name upon the man, using the mask of a Pythagorean disciple to disguise what he really was. For in that case his reputation for us as a philosopher will be gone, and we shall have an ass instead concealed in a lion's skin; and we shall detect him a sophist in the truest sense, cadging for alms among the cities, and a wizard, if there ever was one, instead of a philosopher (*CH* 5, 8–16).

Indeed, the revelation of a sophist beneath the mask of a would-be philosopher is the crucial point of many of the discrepancies I listed above. The question now is whether our ancient critic was able to detect some of them despite his partiality, although he might not have interpreted all of them correctly. From his statements it appears that Eusebius was able to distinguish between a historically documented Apollonius, who had lived about two hundred years before, and a literary figure portrayed by Philostratus. It is only the latter whom he criticizes.

Remarkably, Eusebius notices nearly the same incongruities in the birth-story as I did above. Here it is immediately apparent that Apollonius is Proteus, which means he is a god. And therefore Eusebius lists some faculties characterizing divine beings who surpass common humanity, for example the knowledge of all languages, but also of things people have in mind and do not talk about (ὁ σιωπῶσιν), and especially the gifts of prescience and prophecy. In short: "We learn that Apollonius was born superior to mankind in general, and so he is described from the first moment of his birth throughout his history" (*CH* 8, 17–18). This, of course, also serves as an argument against Hierocles' affirmation that Apollonius is only "a man pleasing to the gods" (*CH* 2, 22: ἀνὴρ θεοῖς κεχαρισμένος).

The critic finds some passages in the *VA* which are not easy to connect with divinity. For example, when the narrator of the *VA* relates that the young Apollonius had a good memory and understanding and that he was able to speak the pure Attic idiom, the critic asks why an omnipotent god should have any difficulties in speaking Attic. Similarly when Philostratus explains that the Arabs achieve prescience by eating the heart or the liver of dragons, the critic concludes that Apollonius contravenes Pythagorean vegetarianism, "in order to participate in a form of wisdom that was in vogue among the Arabs. After learning under such masters, how could he attain to their accomplishments otherwise than by imitating their example?" (*CH* 10, 11–14). This reasoning has further consequences: the Christian excludes any direct knowledge of or influence by Pythagorean sources:

It follows then that he (sc. Apollonius) learnt these things not from Pythagoras, but from other sources; and with a willful affection of solemnity he only labels himself with the philosopher's name (*CH* 11, 35–37).

Consequently, Apollonius is either not of divine nature as alleged in the prooemium, since he needed teachers, or he has been taught by teachers, but not those named by the narrator. In any case, however, the critic is right in stressing a discrepancy.

He is also aware that Philostratus had to write an encomiastic *bios* that defines clear boundaries of credibility:

I am however quite ready to accept all that is probable and has an air of truth about it, even though such details may be somewhat exaggerated and highly-colored out of compliment of a good man; for I could still bring myself to accept them, as long as they are not bewilderingly wonderful and full of nonsense (*CH* 12, 7–11).

In other words, the critic accepts some exaggeration in order to establish the image of a specific sage, as long as the components are coherent and not inconsistent. Otherwise the effect is as exposed above: the puzzled reader is no longer able to cope with these facts. It is interesting that Eusebius himself seems to recognize that errors of this kind in the *récit* could damage the image of the writer and that of the subject, the sage of Tyana, as well.

But one may consider Eusebius' criticism a bit unfair: is it not a little narrow-minded to criticize such details? I think not, because, as Eusebius himself mentions (*CH* 18), Iarchas, the Chief of the Brahmins, already knows Apollonius' name, speaks Greek to him and even knows that the letter delivered by Apollonius contains a typo before having read it (*VA* III 16). So, obviously Philostratus deals with the issue of prescience in exactly the inconsequential way for which Eusebius criticizes him. Indeed, Apollonius would not have asked questions like this if he were a god of prophecy.

But let us investigate some other points of the Christian's criticism. As I noted in *Philosophos Bios*, the theodicy proclaimed by Apollonius is rather simple.⁴³ When Apollonius has to decide which farmer is the legal owner of a treasure, the new owner of the land where the treasure was found or the former who sold the land, his argument is as follows:

⁴³ Schirren 2005:252 on *VA* I 11; Schirren 2005:267–268 on *VA* II 39.

That the gods would never have deprived the one of the land, if he had not been a bad man; nor would ever have given the other riches under the soil, unless he had been better than the seller (*CH* 16, 5–7; cf. *VA* II 39).

Eusebius' criticism is as follows:

We must conclude then, if we are to believe him, that men who are comfortably off and richer than their neighbours, are to be esteemed thrice happy and beloved of the gods, even though they should be the most shameless and abandoned of mankind (*CH* 16, 7–10).

So modern reservations about the reliability of the *VA* are quite similar to those of a nearly contemporary reader. The critic is aware that the fantastic biography comes near to fantastic tales and fictitious literature. Characterizing the third book of the *VA* Eusebius starts:

Let us consider the stories told of the far-famed Brahmins. For here we shall have to admit that the tales of Thule, and any other miraculous legends ever invented by any story-teller, turn out to be by comparison with these quite reliable and perfectly true (*CH* 17, 2–5).

In *Philosophos Bios* I posed the question why Porphyry uses Antonius Diogenes' *Marvels Beyond Thule*, a fictitious tale which included material about Pythagoras, as a reliable source.⁴⁴ But here in Eusebius' treatise *Marvels beyond Thule* is a title denoting fantastic tales without any reliability at all like the *Verae Historiae* of Lucian. Maybe this long overlooked testimony of Antonius Diogenes' novel⁴⁵ is mentioned in order to criticize the whole pagan genre of narratives about holy men, turning the reproach of credulity back against the pagans themselves.

In order to examine the accusation of wizardry made against Apollonius, Eusebius uses Apollonius' own definition (*CH* 42, 9–11): "I call wizards men of false wisdom, for with them the unreal is made real, and the real becomes incredible" (*VA* VIII 7). He then asks the reader "whether we ought to rank Apollonius among divine and philosophic men or among wizards." So he repeatedly returns to the problem of the entire bios, namely the accusation of wizardry and his apparent strategy to refute it by explaining superhuman abilities by means of the sage's δαίμονια κίνησις. One of these *adynata* is the miracle in the prison, where Apollonius takes his fetters off under the eyes of Damis and inserts his leg in them afresh. Eusebius, citing the *VA*, comments:

⁴⁴ Schirren 2005:171.

⁴⁵ Dana 2000.

“Damis says that it was then for the first time that he truly understood the nature of Apollonius, to wit that it was divine and superhuman” (CH 39, 3–5; cf. VA VII 38). Eusebius wonders why Damis had not been astonished earlier, since he had already been the eyewitness of several other superhuman actions by his teacher. So he concludes: “The fellow’s earlier feats were accomplished by the help of some uncanny trick, and that is why Damis was not astounded at these things” (CH 39, 19–21). One may find that such a comment is a bit unfair. However, for every sensible reader the question arises, whether Damis could be so unaware of his master’s management of demons and *empusas* with which they had been confronted. Eusebius’ conclusion might have been drawn hastily and not impartially, but the problem remains in a subtle manner. Also Eusebius’ next objection has a certain validity. Apollonius asks Domitian why he wants to put him in fetters: “If you think me a wizard, how will you bind me? And if you bind me, how can you say I am a wizard?” (CH 39, 28–29). From this reasoning Eusebius deduces the following argument:

“If you are not a wizard, then how was your leg liberated from the chains? And if it was liberated, then how are you not a wizard?” And if, because he submits to the chains, he is not a wizard, then if he does not submit to them, he is a wizard by his own admission (CH 39, 30–33).

Even if it is obvious that the criticism leads to the desired result, the exposure of a magician and would-be philosopher, it is not inappropriate here. On the other hand, in defense of Apollonius it could be added that he is giving a sign of his divine nature because all well-meaning readers would already know that he is not a magician or a wizard; but this is certainly too circular an argument to persuade a sceptical reader. It therefore only intends to convince those readers who do not require further proofs.

In *Philosophos Bios* I have interpreted the meeting with the soul of Achilles as a *metabasis eis allo genos*.⁴⁶ Instead of the *tremendum* the narrative switches into a learned discussion about some Homeric questions. Eusebius remarks:

We next learn that the omniscient one, who boasted of his prescience of future events, was still ignorant of whether Achilles had been buried, and of whether the Muses and Nereids had bestowed their dirges upon him.

⁴⁶ Schirren 2005:301–305.

And accordingly he asked Achilles about these matters, and enquired most earnestly whether Polyxena had been slain over his tomb [...] questions surely of a most solemn kind, and such as to stimulate others to lead the philosophical life of the hero, besides being in themselves of much importance (*CH* 24, 8–14).

Eusebius feels some discrepancies between the pretended omniscience of Apollonius and the philological attitude of the questions posed. These are the questions of a learned sophist and not of a philosopher leading mankind to the right manner of living. Also the *μῆνις*-leitmotiv evoked by the figure of Antisthenes, a pupil of Apollonius whom Achilles hated, because he was a descendant of the house of Priam, and who therefore had to leave his master, is correctly noticed by Eusebius: is not this narrated with a little irony, or does it not at least appear odd for a hero like Achilles? But in Eusebius' view, a *κακοήθης περιεργία*, a devilish curiosity, is at work when Apollonius talks to the *φάσμα*, whom he at first sight considers to be an evil demon. Therefore he is convinced that it is not the soul of Achilles but a demon "of a malignant and envious disposition, both rancorous and mean in humour" (*CH* 29, 11–13).

At this point it is evident that where a modern reader detects signs of irony referring to discrepancies and other oddities, the ancient Christian suspected wizardry and communication with evil demons. Most of what I have interpreted as indications of irony appears to the Christian critic as the result of an insufficiently hidden act of wizardry.

The last chapters of the treatise are concerned with the problem of fate and human will (*CH* 43–48). Eusebius tries to show that if all is determined by Fate, no philosophical life rooted in moral conduct and decision is possible. Starting with the hyperbole uttered against Domitian, Eusebius adduces several absurdities in order to damage the philosophical image of the hero. Apollonius explains what he has said in Ionia about Fate ("You fool, how wrong you are about the Fates and Necessity, for even if you kill the man destined to rule after you, he will live again", *VA* VII 9, transl. Jones) as follows:

And in drawing my examples from royalty, I had reference, I admit, to the Acrisii and to the house of Laïos, and to Astyages, the Mede, and to many other monarchs who thought that they were making good provision in such cases (*VA* VIII 7, transl. Jones).

Here Eusebius feels something similar to what I felt in interpreting this passage: the philosopher forfeits his image as a friend of truth, because every reader knows that his answer to Domitian is not what he really meant in Ionia. Explaining the hyperbole I had noticed a sign

of a rhetorical figure that confirms the ironic intention of this passage as a whole.⁴⁷

Eusebius remarks:

In this passage, a treatise written ostensibly in the interest of truth draws a picture of a man who was at once a flatterer and a liar, and anything rather than a philosopher; for after inveighing so bitterly on the earlier occasion against Domitian, he now flatters him, generous fellow that he is, and pretends that the doctrines he mooted in Ionia about the Fates and Necessity, so far from being directed against him rather told in his favour (*CH* 43, 27–33).

And we would definitely agree with this statement. But whereas Eusebius thinks about a drunken narrator listing the contradictory statements of Apollonius in the *VA*, we interpret such discrepancies as a sign of an ironically different meaning. Thus, Eusebius is not able to reach this second level when he concludes:

For these are the authors (Damis and Philostratus) who lay these facts before us, and they are clearly convicted by the light of truth since they thus contradict themselves, by being vapouring braggarts and nothing else, convicted by their inconsistencies of being downright liars, men devoid of education and charlatans (*CH* 43, 57–60).

That is because he focuses on the apparent lies without asking further what their function might be. And it is important to stress that the εἰρων is a liar, but with a specific intention.⁴⁸ What Eusebius lacks is the key to the next door behind the apparent oddities. Nevertheless, his final conclusion is not too far from my own:

At the same time if anyone ventures to overpass the limits of truth and tries to deify him as no other philosopher has been deified, he will at the best, though unawares, be rubbing into him the accusation of wizardry; for this work of pretentious sophistry can only serve, in my opinion, to convict him, and lay him open in the eyes of all men of sense to this terrible accusation (*CH* 48, 20–25).

The important difference, however, is this: I do not believe that the author of the *VA* was unaware of writing in such a manner.

So Hierocles and Eusebius present themselves as two typically disposed nearly contemporary readers. Typically disposed, that is, in the sense that on the basis of the same source the former considers

⁴⁷ Schirren 2005:243–244.

⁴⁸ Schirren 2005:286–288.

Apollonius a godlike philosopher with superhuman powers, the latter a charlatan of some capacity.⁴⁹ Such divergent views are however not unusual in ancient biographies of philosophers.⁵⁰ A new ring is audible concerning the concept of the saviour, which finds a vague parallel in the idea of the philosopher as *καθηγεμών*.

It is due to the sophistry of an author like Philostratus that the switching between the point of views of Hierocles and the Christian critic gives us a specific pleasure: one minute we see the rabbit, the next the duck.

⁴⁹ Schirren 2005:319–324.

⁵⁰ Schirren 2005:69–211.

“NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET”?
PLUTARCH AND PHILOSTRATUS’ *LIFE OF APOLLONIUS*:
SOME THEMES AND TECHNIQUES

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Introduction: on the Commensurability of Plutarch and Philostratus

The very undertaking of a comparative reading of Plutarch and Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius* seems to be almost an act of hybris. To be sure, the history of the scholarship on both œuvres shows some resemblance; scholars have focussed, for example, on the question of ‘sources and historical reliability’, and have established the position of Plutarch in the philosophical and biographical tradition on the one hand, and of Philostratus in the movement of the Second Sophistic on the other. But they have never ventured to register in a systematic way the particular topics common to both authors—this will, of course, also have to do with the bulk and variety of the œuvres involved. But neither have they, on a more general level, reflected on any of the possible analogies *qua* goals, strategies and techniques of both authors.¹ It seems as if the very idea of any commensurability of Plutarch and Philostratus as authors is so fantastic, that it could only be conceived by a daring γόης.

The undertaking is nevertheless a most appealing, if not irresistible challenge. For it should be gratifying to “liberate these Greeks” from their relative isolation, and to bridge the Hellespont between the Chaeronean and the Cappadocian who were contemporaries under the same Roman emperors, between one who is commonly labelled “a philosopher” and one who was actually a sophist, and between authors who both wrote biographies. Yet, in order to avoid a flatly tragic outcome of the whole enterprise, it seems indeed advisable to limit it here to no more than a scouting of the field. I shall first try to gather factual evidence that links Plutarch to Apollonius, and Philostratus to Plutarch. Next, I shall examine the prooemium of the *Life of Apollonius* and illustrate how its technique and some of its themes are relevant to the formal prooemia

¹ But see the suggestions of Jones 1971:36–38.

of Plutarch's *Lives*. Finally, I shall attempt to make a rough σύγκρισις of the *Life of Apollonius* and a Plutarchean 'Pythagorean *Life*'.

Making contact: Plutarch, Apollonius, and Philostratus

Plutarch and Apollonius

Let us, then, first make a survey of the historical, chronological, topographical and thematic space shared by Apollonius and Plutarch (ca. 45–125). At first sight the portents are not very good.

Who was the "historical" Apollonius? I quote Jones:

(...) an itinerant Pythagorean philosopher, travelling mainly in the Eastern part of the Roman empire. He was a religious and moral preacher, with a predilection for staying in temples and issuing advice to the personnel; an adviser of cities, who received honorific testimonials from several of them; a teacher with numerous pupils; and a spiritual counselor to at least a few highly placed Romans. These Romans perhaps included the emperors Vespasian and Titus, though Philostratus may have invented the story of Apollonius' prosecution by Domitian (Jones 2005:11–12).

In Plutarch's works that came down to us,² there is no single mention of this Apollonius of Tyana, who was his contemporary for at least 50 years. This observation, if brought into a discussion about the historical Apollonius, triggers questions that reveal some striking parallels between the two men and make Plutarch's silence paradoxical, if not somewhat alarming.

Since Plutarch never mentions Apollonius, is it to be assumed that he never met him, or even that he was unaware of his existence? Plutarch was sympathetic to Pythagoreanism³ to the point that he wrote essays inveighing against the eating of meat; he visited Rome, Italy, Alexandria and Asia Minor, where he probably lectured;⁴ he was an expert in religious and ethical questions; he was a priest of the temple of Apollo at Delphi, and a counsellor of the priestess Clea; he held office in his

² One should keep in mind that almost half of Plutarch's works is lost. Arguing on the basis of the surviving *corpus Plutarcheum* thus inevitably comes down to an *argumentum e silentio*. Still, the surviving corpus is large and varied enough to allow for plausible inferences.

³ On Plutarch and Pythagoreanism, see e.g. Hershbell 1984, Tsekourakis 1986 and 1987, Becchi 2004, and Van der Stockt 2006.

⁴ On the possibility that Plutarch lectured in Smyrna, see Jones 1971:14–15.

hometown, in the Amphictyonia and in the provincia Achaea; he was a friend and counsellor of Romans like Sossius Senecio, Fundanus and maybe even of Trajan;⁵ he was the author of essays such as *That a philosopher ought to converse especially with men in power* and *To the uneducated ruler*; he was a teacher with some pupils and many friends from all over the Roman Empire,⁶ and he disliked Domitian.⁷ Did this Plutarch ever hear of Apollonius? It is possible, although that very possibility casts some doubts on the fame and relevance of Apollonius in the first century. Anyway, as soon as we add more (but historically less reliable) detail to Apollonius' biography, it becomes more unlikely that Plutarch would not have even known about him. If Apollonius was able to avert earthquakes by making sacrifices, as the VA (VI 41) claims, would the Chaeronean, who wrote an essay *On earthquakes* (Lamprias catalogue n° 212; the essay is lost), not have heard of him? Or, if Apollonius twice (as IV 24 and VIII 19 claim) visited the Trophonium in Lebadeia—given that it was located in Plutarch's backyard and that Plutarch's brother was a priest there—the author of a (lost) essay *On the descent into the cave of Trophonius* (Lamprias catalogue n° 181) must have heard of him.⁸ Or, if we believe that Apollonius visited Delphi and had conversations with the priests, as the VA claims (IV 24), Plutarch should have heard of him.

However, since we stick to what is beyond reasonable doubt concerning the historical Apollonius, we must admit that it is possible that Plutarch never heard of him, and we can suspect that Apollonius was not a very famous person in the first century. Unless, of course, Plutarch *did* know about this Apollonius with whom he had some affinities, but deliberately neglected or even refused to mention him, because he was in some way irrelevant or repugnant to Plutarch's mind. The motives for this (hypothetical) disdain are not difficult to imagine. Would the author of several philosophical and theological—and always academically cautious—essays on things divine, divination and manifestations of the divine in our world have thought poorly of this man, who, even in his epideictic portrait by Philostratus, can hardly be regarded as a

⁵ The so-called *Letter to Trajan* might very well be authentic: see Beck 2002.

⁶ Plutarch's friends and pupils are listed in Puech 1992.

⁷ Cf. the *Life of Publicola* XV 3–5.

⁸ In *De genio Socratis* 21–23 Simmias reports the experience of Timarchus descending into the Trophonium.

profound thinker?⁹ This is not implausible. Or would the author of the essay *On superstition* have regarded Apollonius as just one of those eastern sorcerers, as a γόης, not worthy of even being mentioned?¹⁰ This is equally not implausible. After all, why would Plutarch have held a different opinion from that of the priests of the Trophonium themselves, who denied Apollonius access on the grounds that they would not allow some sorcerer-type (γόητι ἄνθρωπῳ) to test the oracle (VA VIII 19)?

The speculation about Plutarch's aversion to Apollonius as a trivial γόης brings us to another impediment, which is actually an irritating σκάνδαλον. Philostratus (I 3) mentions as one of his sources a certain Moeragenes: "he wrote four books about Apollonius and yet was greatly ignorant about the Master." Some scholars thought that this biography was actually hostile to Apollonius and that it described him as a γόης, although others would deny that and explain Philostratus' negative comment as a symptom of artistic rivalry,¹¹ or as reflecting Philostratus' intention to subordinate thaumaturgical issues to philosophical achievements.¹² Anyway, wouldn't it be marvellous if this Moeragenes were the same as the Moeragenes who is one of the interlocutors in Plutarch's *Quaestiones Convivales* IV 6? This latter Moeragenes is apparently not ignorant, at least not about (Jewish) religion. Unfortunately, the positive identification of Philostratus' and Plutarch's Moeragenes is still, let us say, a *desideratum*¹³ and we cannot take it for granted that Plutarch's Moeragenes could and would have informed him about Apollonius.

To sum up: the portents were right. In the information that is available to us, there is no conclusive material evidence that Plutarch actually ever heard of Apollonius. One might suspect that the historical Apollonius was less relevant to his own times than the VA intended to make him for posterity. Still, the survey of circumstantial indications favours the attempt at a comparative reading of Plutarch and the VA; for it reveals some thematic affinities between the Chaeronean and the Tyanean,

⁹ Jones 2005:9; Knoles 1981:293–294.

¹⁰ Superstition is associated with barbarians through the quote (*On Superstition* 166 A) from Euripides' *The Trojan Women* 764: "Greeks from barbarians finding evil ways"; Jews are also characterised as superstitious: 169C. It is remarkable that precisely Pythagoras "who said that we reach our best when we draw near to the gods" is refuted twice (*On Superstition* 169E, *The Obsolescence of Oracles* 413B) in a context of a discussion about the proper relation of man towards the god!

¹¹ Bowie 1978:1673 and 1994:188.

¹² Raynor 1984:224; Swain 1996:384.

¹³ Anderson 1986:123 and Bowie 1978:1678–1679 seem inclined to envisage the possibility of this identification, Mumprecht 1983:1026 rejects it.

such as their interest in Pythagoreanism, their preoccupation with the dealings of a philosopher with men in power and their involvement in religious matters and speculations. A comparative reading of the treatment of those themes in Plutarch and the VA cannot but contribute to a better understanding of the œuvres in question.

Philostratus and Plutarch

Thus, paradoxically, the absence of indubitable material links between Plutarch and Apollonius encourages us to the project of a comparative reading of *Plutarch and Philostratus as authors*.

Philostratus, in a letter to Julia Domna (Ep. I.73), mentions Plutarch. He asks the empress "to persuade Plutarch not to be annoyed with sophists" and he suggests that, if she fails to persuade him, the empress will know by what name to call him ... Because of his professed aversion to sophists¹⁴ Plutarch gets tit for tat. It seems reasonable, indeed, to accept that Philostratus pointed at Plutarch of Chaeronea,¹⁵ and not just at some "friend of Julia".¹⁶ Philostratus' conscious neglect of chronological obstacles¹⁷ is part of a strategy to establish a communality of feeling and opinions between Julia, himself, and his readers. It is, however, regrettable that the casual reference to Plutarch does not allow us to make assumptions about the extent and the depth of Philostratus' familiarity with Plutarch's works. This hampers all speculation about any possible inspiration by Plutarch or imitation and allusion to him.

Then again, both Plutarch and Philostratus are biographers. This sounds promising, although there are two restrictions. The first is that the VA is sometimes regarded as a "biography" (Jones 2005:3), as a "laudatory biography" (Bowie 1994:193), as "biographie" and at the same time "oeuvre de divertissement" (Reardon 1971:268), but also as "hagiographic geography" (Elsner 1997:22), as "presque un roman" (Reardon 1971:189) or as "anti-roman" (Billault 2000:105 and 1992:274), etc. If the VA is a biography, it certainly is also a "text" with "novelistic, hagiographic and apologetic features" (Elsner 1997:22). In short, Whitmarsh rightly speaks of "the generic slipperiness of subject and

¹⁴ Jeuckens 1908 offers a discussion of the relevant material.

¹⁵ That is the position of Anderson 1986:4–5.

¹⁶ As Kayser 1871:538 would have it.

¹⁷ Unless the allusion is to "a lost work of Plutarch in which the sophists were attacked": Bowersock 1969:104.

author alike (2005:77).” The second restriction is that Plutarch wrote mostly pairs of biographies, namely of a Roman and a Greek, and that he explicitly invited his readers to read one *Life* in the light of the other. This syncritical method¹⁸ has inherently more potential for eliciting a nuanced assessment¹⁹ of the characters involved, than the choice of just one “hero” and one *Life*. Even apart from that, it is quite clear for any reader of Plutarch that he is very little inclined to portray any of his characters as immaculate holy men, whereas the VA was intended to be (also) a hagiographic document.

But then, in view of their common status as narrative texts, Plutarch’s *Lives* and the VA must inevitably be commensurable at the level of some specific characteristics, parts, or techniques of narrative texts. One might consider the technique of beginning the narrative, i.e. the prooemia of both authors, in which they explicitly talk about their sources, their methods and their goals. When Plutarch proudly announces that he will write “ways of life” rather than “history” (οὐχ ἱστορίας ἀλλὰ βίους: *Life of Alexander* I), and when Philostratus pretends to give precise information about the facts concerning Apollonius (ἐξακριβῶσαι τὸν ἄνδρα: VA I 2), is that, in view of the evidence of their actual writings, all that they did and intended to do? It has been observed both that several of Plutarch’s *Lives* are ‘disappointingly’ historical rather than biographical, and that Philostratus’ narrative about the life of Apollonius is sometimes rather vague, incomplete, or flatly unhistorical.

It seems, then, that while hailing the prosperous omnia, we should not overlook the difficulties involved in a comparative reading of Philostratus’ VA and Plutarch. The problem is to assess the possibly divergent agenda of both authors, and the warning is not to make generalizations about either of them. Hence, in the second part of this paper, I turn to a specific topic, viz. a *synkrisis* of themes and techniques in the prooemium of the VA and in the formal prooemia of Plutarchean *Lives*.

¹⁸ On *synkrisis* in Plutarch see Duff 1999:243–286.

¹⁹ Plutarch’s moralism is “both descriptive and proreptic” (Pelling 2002:248).

*The prooemia of the VA and of some Plutarchean Lives**A rhetorical analysis of the prooemium of the VA*²⁰

Going by the criteria expounded by Philip Stadter²¹ in his study of the prooemia of Plutarch's *Lives*, the introduction to the VA is a formal prooemium: it is separated from the body of the story by the logical particle τοίνυν, it names explicitly the person whose life will be narrated, it discusses matters of sources, and it contains a kind of justification for the choice of the subject. Although it has no formal dedicatee, Julia Domna, had she been alive, would have been the natural choice. I shall first make some rhetorical observations on this prooemium, and then compare some of its techniques and themes with Plutarch.

§1

The VA opens in a remarkable way, and, but for the title of the work, the reader would gain the distinct impression that it was about Pythagoras. He is the first character to be introduced, his is the first name to be mentioned, albeit only by secondary narrators who are allowed to fill almost the entire first paragraph with a dry report on the *kefalaia* concerning Pythagoras. Why is the primary narrator hiding for so long? What does this imply concerning his attitude towards the theme of Pythagoras that is brought up only by the secondary narrators? Why is this narrative by the "admirers" made to sound like an objective report rather than a eulogy? What was Philostratus hoping to achieve?

The reader has read the title of the work; he knows this will be a work on Apollonius. The anonymous narrators' instructive report about Pythagoras must remind the reader of some basic facts: he should keep them in mind in order to be able to understand what will be argued in the corpus. Those facts cannot be discussed;²² they are merely recapitulated—the audience is supposed to nod in assent (in rhetorical

²⁰ According to Bowie 1994:188 the openings are "redolent of a sophistic prefatory discourse or *prolalia*."

²¹ Stadter 1988:276; I owe a lot of inspiration to Stadter's treatment of Plutarch's formal prooemia of the *Lives*.

²² Only little doubt is admitted: the *concessio/confessio* (Lausberg 1990:§856) concerning the reliability of the report that Pythagoras met other gods than Apollo—it is not quite clear who makes it!—, and the somewhat prudent view on Empedocles as a follower of Pythagoras are stated very discretely.

terms: a case of the *genus honestum* is used as a leg up).²³ Through the recapitulation, Philostratus is making his reader *docilem*, and thus he must have thought of his own case as belonging to the *genus obscurum*. As such, the appropriate action for him to take was indeed to negotiate between the complexity of the case argued for in the corpus on the one hand, and the capacity of the audience to understand it on the other (Lausberg 1999:§272).

But the last *kolon* of the first paragraph dramatically displaces everything. The *primary narrator* comes to the fore (με, προῦθέμην). He dismisses the anonymous narrator's musings about the followers of Pythagoras' doctrines (and about time, too: the continuous nodding assent of the audience threatened to arouse their *taedium*):²⁴ to deal with more such musings is inappropriate (οὐ προσήκει) for him.

He announces his own account, without explicitly saying what it will be about. However, since the reader has read the title, he can assume that it will be an account about Apollonius as yet another of the philosophers of Pythagoras' kind. However, with more stories about followers of Pythagoras being impatiently dismissed, the reader might think Philostratus' account will be about Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism in general! The least one should say is that Philostratus, by remaining non-committal, is keeping his audience in suspense.

Anyway, he relocates *the audience*: they should now be curious, especially since by the dramatic νῦν (Lausberg 1999:§272), and σπεύδοντα they are drawn into the primary narrator's own time and program to offer an account distinct from that of the first narrators.

It is precisely through the urgent appeal to the attention of the reader, however, that *the case* is relocated as well; it no longer belongs exclusively to the *genus obscurum*, but also to the *genus humile*; it is a case that for some reason, to Philostratus' way of thinking, might be uninteresting to the reader (Lausberg 1999:§64.4 and 269), and thus asks for the use of techniques to make them interested. Now why would Philostratus' audience be uninterested?

Theoretically, it is possible that it considered Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism in itself a trivial, uninteresting issue (Lausberg 1999:§270)

²³ "...cette présence du philosophe samien en filigrane du récit ne conduit pas à l'effacement d'Apollonios. Elle rehausse au contraire ses mérites comme un piédestal sacré sur lequel il se dresse": Billault 2000:116.

²⁴ The proemial digression risks being no more than a tedious detour.

(hypothesis 1); but wouldn't Philostratus then be rather clumsy, pedantically stuffing the audience (through the secondary narrator's report) with dry information, if he knew they had not asked for it? The same objection can be made against the hypothesis (hypothesis 2) that Philostratus thought that the audience was supersaturated with information and literature about Pythagoras. Finally, if we suppose Philostratus thought that the audience was not interested in his account about Pythagoras because it was prejudicial towards disbelievers or opponents, this hypothesis (hypothesis 3) would go counter to his apparent conviction that the audience sympathized with Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism.

On the other hand, the *topos of attentum parare* makes sense if Philostratus assumed that his audience would by now expect a λόγος about Apollonius without being interested in such a λόγος. We are left with the question of why Philostratus manipulated his audience into the position of 'an audience uninterested in a story about Apollonius'. We have no good reason to envisage the possibility (hypothesis 1') that, in Philostratus' opinion, his audience regarded 'Apollonius' as a trivial issue in itself: the empress Julia apparently was interested (I 3). But indifference in an audience can also spring from other sources (Lausberg 1999:§271). The audience might, for example, be already won over to someone else's case, a case arguing about Apollonius in a different, if not opposing way (hypothesis 2'). Moreover, there is yet another possibility (hypothesis 3'): the audience might simply be supersaturated and unwilling to take notice of yet another literary work about Apollonius.²⁵

To sum up: Philostratus, exploiting a case belonging to the *genus honestum*, is announcing a case of the *genus obscurum* (viz. Apollonius in relation to Pythagoreanism) as well as belonging to the *genus humile*, and exploiting techniques of *attentum parare*. His intended audience sympathizes clearly with Pythagoreanism, but not necessarily with his own case, and so he leaves his audience in suspense.

§2

In the second paragraph the actual subject of the VA is finally brought to the fore: the customs (the ἐπιτηδεύοντα) of Apollonius; and again Philostratus subverts positions, and he does so in a few words, viz.

²⁵ One should recall the possible motives for Philostratus' hostile attitude towards Moeragenes: cf. *supra*.

ἀδελφὰ γὰρ τούτοις and θειότερον ἢ ὁ Πυθαγόρας τῇ σοφίᾳ προσελθόντα τυρρανίδων τε ὑπεράραντα. These few words constitute a genuine *coup de théâtre*.

In the first place, they change *the primary narrator's own position*. So far he has not been situated at all on the scale of sympathy vis-à-vis his subject (Apollonius in relation to Pythagoreanism). Now he suddenly does make claims (ἀδελφὰ and θειότερον ἢ ὁ Πυθαγόρας). He does not hide any longer behind the 'objectivity' of any secondary narrators about Pythagoras, but plainly confesses his partisan opinion about Apollonius. It is important to notice the climax in Philostratus' claim: it makes the case extremely paradoxical, to the point of bringing it close to the *genus admirabile/turpe*, the kind of case that is simply untenable according to the intended audience.

At the same time, Philostratus' confession of a partisan position urges *the audience* to leave its position of mere cerebral curiosity: it should be willing to *praise* Apollonius (as an item belonging to the *genus honestum*) just like the secondary narrators did with Pythagoras, and even—this is almost a provocation—to a higher degree, at least concerning his "philosophy" and his "victory over tyrannies." The latter item must come as a complete surprise to the audience: it is not anticipated at all in the instructive narrative about Pythagoras. Consequentially, it directs the reader's attention to this item.

Calling for attention and inviting praise: where is the case now? Although it promised to become *honestum*, it is extremely *anceps*. But what was problematic, and why? The problem was the correct assessment of the wisdom of Apollonius, more specifically its philosophical and sound nature (ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθινῆς σοφίας, ἣν φιλοσόφως τε καὶ ὕγιως ἐπήσκησεν): this is what is at stake, purely on account of widespread ignorance (οὐπω οἱ ἄνθρωποι γινώσκουσιν). Hence, in the view of the primary narrator—I will call him Philostratus from now on—the common praise is only 'selective' or, instead of praise, there is blame: some, because of defective knowledge (κακῶς γινώσκοντες), think of him as a μάγος (the word has a negative connotation here, it makes him "a philosophic impostor" (Jones 2005:35 for βιαιῶς σοφόν), since he dealt with *magoi* in Babylonia and India and with the Naked Ones of Egypt. The *signum* for the accusation of *mageia* is not inserted without reason. It offers Philostratus the opportunity to *argue* (Lausberg 1999:§368) that the *signum* is a *signum incertum*: the facts are not denied, but the conclusions from it are rejected. Whether the fact is Apollonius' commerce with *magoi*, or his gift of prophecy, the conclusion of *mageia* is incorrect.

The—apparently and anyway supposedly authoritative—examples of Empedocles, Pythagoras, Democritus and Plato on the one hand, and of Socrates and Anaxagoras on the other, make it clear that the accusation is not just false, but suggest that it is inspired by ill will (proven, e.g., by the self-contradiction of the blasphemers).²⁶ Apollonius is the victim of an unjust accusation, and is not treated fairly. In short, as is but a natural consequence of the shift from *genus humile* and *obscurum* to the *genus anceps*, Philostratus fully plays on the topos of *benevolentia*. Not only does he present himself as an advocate of the truth (*a sua persona*: Lausberg 1999:§275a),²⁷ he also represents his client as the victim of an unjust accusation (Lausberg 1999:§275g) and 'the other party'²⁸ as unfair (*ab adversariorum persona*: Lausberg 1999:§276).

Anyway, we cannot be surprised at the justification Philostratus offers for his writing the VA. His goal is first formulated in a negative way: he cannot neglect the ignorance of the multitude—a nice compliment to his audience, which, if Philostratus has any common sense, is of course excluded from the general ignorance. Positively, his goal is to give an accurate account (ἐξακριβῶσαι) a) of the chronology of Apollonius' words and deeds on the one hand (this seems to be his remedy against selective praise)²⁹ and b) of the special character of his wisdom (this seems to be his remedy against the accusation of *mageia* and will justify *the fame* of Apollonius as δαίμονιός τε καὶ θεῖος on the other; apparently, an accurate account of the facts will legitimise Apollonius' fame).

Finally, the primary narrator argues *a sua persona* again: he has taken pains to be well informed. But he feels the need to specify the sources of his most detailed information, rousing the interest of his reader with ὥδε συνελέξαμην (I 3; cf. already, but more generally pointing to collecting sources: ξυνείλεκται δέ μοι in I 2).

²⁶ The accusation goes counter to the *praeiudicia*: Lausberg 1999:§353.

²⁷ In retrospective, his νῦν...ἐπιτέλεσαι can be read as a suggestion of *extemporalis oratio* (Lausberg 1999:§275b), that is, as another means of soliciting *benevolentia*.

²⁸ The 'other party' is identified by periphrasis (Lausberg 1999:§277b and §598); Philostratus avoids naming names, in order not to irritate the reader (*delectare*)—it is too soon to launch an open attack—and to arouse his curiosity. On the other hand, the periphrasis might well be a means to avoid mentioning Moeragenes.

²⁹ But can we interpret "an accurate account" as "a complete account"? If so, Philostratus clearly does not regard his intended audience as 'supersaturated' with information: there will be novel things for them too.

§3

From a rhetorical point of view, Philostratus does not simply mention his sources, he simultaneously establishes the value of the *testimonia* (Lausberg 1999:§354) concerning Apollonius. The criterion for the evaluation is a *locus communis*: “there is no evidence that is stronger than the one that rests on knowledge” (Quintilian *Inst.* V 7.3). Damis, then, is a reliable source: he is wise, a follower of Apollonius in the literal (κοινωνῆσαι καὶ αὐτός φησι) as well as in the metaphorical (προσφιλοσοφῆσας) sense, he is an eye-witness and his account is very detailed: he knows. But his style was unskilful (οὐ δεξιῶς). Now the alleged absence of *eloquentia* must make the audience favourably disposed towards this witness as being not shrewd and thus sincere; at the same time, the audience will readily take for granted only what is suggested, namely that, at the request of Julia, Philostratus made a transcription improving the style of Damis. Is Philostratus simply parading his connections with people in high stations (Whitmarsh 2001:226), or is he also creating goodwill toward his work (Stadter 1988:282)? Be that as it may, it still leaves us with the impression that Philostratus presents a large part of his VA as being no more than a stylistic upgrade of Damis. Moreover, even if Philostratus means to communicate that the report of Damis is so accurate and reliable that he will follow it closely, only improving its style, this is somewhat of an anticlimax. Maximus of Aegae, apparently, is good enough to rely on his information about Apollonius’ stay in Aegae: he fills a gap. From a rhetorical point of view, the treatment of Maximus is a little disappointing: Philostratus makes nothing more of this ‘inartificial proof’. The same goes for the third written *testimonium*. The will of Apollonius himself will serve as a guide to interpret the wisdom of Apollonius as truly inspired philosophy; the authenticity, let alone the authority of this *testimonium*, is not questioned at all.

Moeragenes is discredited because of his ignorance about many things: he will either have praised Apollonius only selectively, or in the wrong way, or he will have censured him; it is indeed most likely that he was one of the ignorants Philostratus mentioned before. In view of the repeated use of φιλοσοφία, I am inclined to think that Philostratus was not happy with Moeragenes’ focus on the *mageia* of Apollonius (even if Philostratus regarded Moeragenes as ‘a friendly witness’).

In short, in reviewing his sources, Philostratus tries to convince his readers that he can cure the general ignorance, since he gathered accurate and complete information, and that he can assess the special nature of Apollonius’ inspired philosophy. Ultimately, the question of

the sources is integrated into a strategy of arousing goodwill towards the author: he knows. The last sentence of the prooemium repeats the twofold goal: this will be a praise bestowing τιμή on Apollonius, and this work will be useful (ὠφέλεια) since it will provide new facts to those who like to learn. In view of what Philostratus argued before, I am inclined to interpret the parataxis τε...καί as a hendiadys: praise through useful and accurate information. That means that Philostratus ultimately intends to present a case of the *genus honestum*.

The prooemium of the *VA* is not very long,³⁰ but fairly sophisticated. It is not sophisticated because of the occurrence of the traditional rhetorical *topoi*; any educated and skilful author of this period was able to deploy them. It is sophisticated because it *plays* with *topoi*, and thus with the whole complex of the 'politically correct' relation between the case, the author and his audience (τὸ πρέπον). From the *genus obscurum* and *anceps*, with the *topoi* of *docilem* and *attentum parare* that go with it, and addressing an audience that is possibly assenting (*benevolum a causa*), yet possibly somewhat uninterested, but whose attention has somehow been reclaimed by means of the prooemial digression, it reveals its genuine case in a climax, pleading for the *benevolentia* of a surprised audience confronted with a questionable case, and finally promises to present an honourable case to an inquisitive audience that is favourably disposed towards the author. The 'I' of the primary narrator only shortly lightens up at the end of the first movement, in order to correct the expectations of the reader; it comes fully to the fore at the end of the second movement, in order to justify its own action, and it establishes the authority of its own λόγος throughout the third movement.

Proemial technique in VA §1–3 and the formal prooemia of Plutarch's Lives

As *comparantia* to the prooemium of the *VA*, I shall take into account the 13 formal prooemia, each of which introduces a pair of *Lives* in Plutarch. All statements that will be made about the *VA* only hold within the limits of that comparison.

In general the proem of the *VA* is not that long. It contains 102 lines; the average length of a proem of one pair of the Plutarchean *Lives* involved is 68 lines, but then one of those pairs of *Lives* would fill only about a quarter of the *VA*. In absolute terms, however, it ranges among the longer Plutarchean prooemia.

³⁰ It is 'long' in absolute terms, but not in its relation to the whole of the long *Life*.

Staging the 'I'

1. The presence of the primary narrator is not significantly more predominant in the proem of the VA (1 mention per 14,5 lines) than in the Plutarchean prooemia (1 mention per 16,9 lines). Nor is his first introduction at line 33, after 32,3% of that prooemium, exceptionally late (the risk that the report about Pythagoras would arouse the *taedium* of the audience was not that big!); some Plutarchean *Lives* make the reader wait for even longer: 81 (*Phocion–Cato Minor*), 78 (*Pelopidas–Marcellus*) or 73 (*Cimon–Lucullus*) lines. If we look at the Plutarchean proems where the 'I' is frequently mentioned, viz. 5 to 10 times, and where it is introduced at a moment the proem has been going on for at least 70% of its total size, it appears that the VA with its 7 mentions of the 'I' is not exceptional either. It is only when we compare the proem of the VA with the Plutarchean proems with a frequent mention of the 'I', and look at the frequency of the mention of the 'I' in the last 30% of them, that the VA springs out (6 mentions on a total of 7): *the 'I' makes its presence strongly felt towards the end of the proem.*

2. In the proem of the VA the 'I' refers solely to the primary narrator. In Plutarch the 'we' now and then includes the reader (Pelling 2004:411–412), and thus appeals to a communality of feelings, opinions and experience. E.g., in *Demetrius–Antonius* I 6, the 'I' thinks that 'we' as well will be eager to contemplate and imitate the best if 'we' are also informed about the bad—a charming way of bringing his audience to adopt his own goal; in *Demosthenes–Cicero* I 2 'we' cannot blame the smallness of our native city for our failure to live and think as we ought—a very sympathetic way of giving a moral lesson; in *Agis–Cleomenes* II 4 'we' all observed how the eagerness to win the popular favour leads to disaster for politicians.

3. In the proem of the VA the 'I' does not establish any relation to his audience as a 'You'; it opposes its own account as a cure for the ignorance of the many; his inquisitive reader will greatly profit from his work. The Plutarchean 'I' occasionally addresses the reader as 'You' (*Aemilius–Timoleon* I 6, *Agis–Cleomenes* II 6) and explicitly invites him to make up his own mind concerning the value of his work: his *Lives* present an ambiguous point (διαμφισβήτησις; *Timoleon* I 6); the reader must judge from his narrative whether his initial opinion on the Gracchi is correct (*Agis–Cleomenes* II 6) or whether he aims correctly at the proper mark (*Pericles* II 4), or whether he brought out all resemblances between his characters (*Cimon* III 3); he envisages the possibility that he will fail and asks his reader for indulgence (*Theseus* I 3).

4. The 'I' of the VA makes some effort to make the reader benevolent towards himself. 'I' belonged to the circle of Julia, 'I' am the champion of the truth, 'I' am well informed. The narrator in the Plutarchean proems is also presenting himself as one with connections with persons in high stations: Sossius Senecio, his dedicatee, is mentioned in 3 of them (*Demosthenes-Cicero* I 1, *Theseus-Romulus* I 1, *Dion-Brutus* I 1). However, in general, the 'I' of Plutarch's proems is more modest and frequently solicits the goodwill of his reader. I have caught him only once claiming explicitly that he will narrate the truth and deliver a truthful testimony (τᾶληθῇ διεξιόντες, ἀληθοῦς μαρτυρίας), viz. in *Cimon-Lucullus* II 3; his claim is understandable since he is open to the charge of offering a false narrative in order to be able to praise Lucullus to whom 'we' are obliged. For the rest, he makes fun of himself as one living in a small town and staying there in order not to make it even smaller (*Demosthenes* II 2), expressing only his hope to eliminate fabulous and improbable material (*Theseus* I 3); he is afraid of seeming to be utterly careless and slothful (παντάπασιν ἀμελής... καὶ ἀργός; *Nicias* I 5) in taking notice of the facts, and he "does not know" (οὐκ οἶδα μὴ) if it would not be better to accept the old doctrine about evil demons (*Dion* II 5). This Plutarchean 'I' strives for accurate knowledge, but does not claim omniscience. Besides, the entire proem of the *Alexander-Caesar* and of the *Theseus-Romulus*, and a large part of those of the *Nicias* and of *Demosthenes-Cicero* are pleas (not a self-confident claim) for benevolence towards a possibly deficient 'I'.

5. When it appears rather late and for the first time, the Philostratan 'I' announces his own λόγος, but actually postpones the name of its subject till the next sentence. This is not usually the case in the Plutarchean proems: in only three proems (*Nicias-Crassus* at line 1; *Alexander-Caesar* at line 21; *Theseus-Romulus* at line 29) does the 'I' name the two paralleled heroes; conversely, in four cases (*Aemilius-Timoleon*, *Demetrius-Antonius*, *Demosthenes-Cicero*, *Theseus-Romulus*) the 'I' was present before the naming of the subjects, and then always defending and justifying itself, in two cases after the naming of the subjects, and then also to justify, in this latter case justifying the παραβολή.

6. Finally: the relation of the 'I' to its written sources. From a rhetorical point of view, those are but πίστεις ἄτεχνοι that need rhetorical handling. Philostratus' 'I', as we saw, is not too keen on persuading his audience of the reliability of Maximus and of Apollonius' will: he assumes the audience will take it for granted. About Damis he takes more pains (but with little effect on modern audiences!): he is a wise

pupil of Apollonius, an eye-witness who recorded his journeys, sayings, speeches and predictions. Moeragenes is simply dismissed as ignorant concerning the Master. The Plutarchean 'I' is rarely that blunt and radical. Only Caecilius in the *Demosthenes–Cicero* III 2 and Timaeus in the *Nicias–Crassus* I 2–4 are sharply rebuked, the former because he boldly ventured (ἐνεανιεύσατο) to put forth a comparison between the speeches of Demosthenes and Cicero, thereby displaying lack of self-knowledge (a wit shrewdly soliciting the audience's consent), the latter because he was equally full of youthful conceit (μειρακιώδης) when he came up with demons as an explication for historical events. The suggestion is that of an older and wiser 'I', not inclined to such follies. This *persona* takes it for granted that the audience will accept the reliability of Thucydides and Philistus without further ado, but the narrator himself points to the questionable nature of his sources in the *Theseus*, and to his own unease with Latin sources (*Demosthenes–Cicero* III 1–2);³¹ and with Cicero's opinion on Cato he disagrees in a polite way (*Phocion* III 1) and out of a sense of decorum.

Locating the audience

We have seen Philostratus playing with his audience: he relocates it from the position of consent and willingness to learn (position 1), to that of being surprised and somewhat frowning (position 2), and to that of confidence in the expertise of the narrator and in his promise of providing efficient knowledge, that is: knowledge that will make them consent with the praise of Apollonius (position 3). The *tour de force* was the transition from position 1 to 2; it was effective because of the relatively long postponement of the introduction of the actual theme, and because of its climactic nature.

No such toying with the audience in the formal Plutarchean proems! That would *a priori* induce surprise in an author who stages his narrator mostly as one who is seeking sympathetic contact with his reader, and who displays less self-confidence than the teaching Philostratean 'I'; towards himself, the Plutarchean 'I' almost always asks for benevolence from a position of inferiority. But also *a posteriori* it appears that the Plutarchean narrator is consistent in manoeuvring his audience into one dominant position, viz. into the position of an *attentus* vis-à-vis the subject of his narration.

³¹ Russell 1993:428 calls this "both apology and self-recommendation."

I list the dominant positions (column 2) vis-à-vis the subject (column 3) into which the audience is manipulated by the narrator:

<i>Nicias–Crassus</i>	Attentum (κατανόσεις)	Towards his own focus: character; no “useless history”
<i>Aemilius–Timoleon</i>	Attentum (διαμφισβήτησις)	Towards knowledge about what is noble, and hence provokes improvement of character; towards the role of fortune and wisdom in successful achievements
<i>Demetrius–Antonius</i>	Attentum (άνιστορήτως ἔχοιμεν) (benevolum)	Towards a case of the <i>genus turpe</i> , the contemplation of which should be profitable <i>e contrario</i>
<i>Alexander–Caesar</i>	Attentum (ἔμφασιν ἤθους)	Towards the revelation of the “soul” through signs
<i>Demosthenes–Cicero</i>	Attentum (χαλεπῶς διακριθῆναι)	Towards the comparison of their natures and dispositions; towards the question if nature or fortune made them more alike, resp. in character and circumstances
<i>Theseus–Romulus</i>	Attentum (εἰ... ὄφελος πρὸς ἀλήθειαν)	To the historicity of what is told; to the conflict between strength and intelligence on the one hand and rape and misfortune on the other.
<i>Sertorius–Eumenes</i>	Attentum	Towards relating the character and fortunes of Sertorius to that of other persons
<i>Dion–Brutus</i>	Attentum	Towards the impact of wisdom and justice on the one hand, and good fortune and power on the other, on a public career; towards the question of “ill-boding spectres”
<i>Agis/Cleomenes–Gracchi</i>	(Benevolum) Attentum (ἐπικρινεῖς αὐτός)	(Towards pupils of the Academy) Towards the question of whether the narrative proves that φιλοδοξία ruins a politician
<i>Pericles–Fabius Maximus</i>	Attentum (κρινεῖν)	Towards the question of whether the narrative hits the proper mark in stating that the contemplation of the good will automatically lead to imitation, i.e. performance of virtuous deeds
<i>Cimon–Lucullus</i>	Attentum (οὐ χαλεπὸν συναγαγεῖν)	Towards character and disposition as mixture of good and bad; towards possibly forgotten resemblances
<i>Pelopidas–Marcellus</i>	Attentum	Towards the theme of courage and recklessness in a general
<i>Phocion–Cato Minor</i>	Attentum (λεπτὸς λόγος, διάκρισις, ἀνεύρεσις)	Towards the question of whether Phocion deserves his bad name, and how the leader should deal with the masses; and towards the difference between the two subjects

It is clear then, that Plutarch wanted his reader to be a judge; but often he also gave him the necessary criteria according to which he should make his judgement (that is, he made his reader *docilem*): hence, the proemial digressions on the benefit coming from writing and reading biographies (*Aemilius–Timoleon*, *Pericles–Fabius Maximus*, *Demetrius–Antonius*), on the danger of *philodoxia* in dealing with the mob (*Agis/Cleomenes*), on the necessary characteristics of the statesman (*Phocion*) or the general (Pelopidas–Marcellus) and/or, later on in the proem, the explicit question concerning the similarities and differences between the subjects (*Phocion–Cato Minor*, *Cimon–Lucullus*), or concerning the existence and appearance of ill-boding spectres (*Dion*), or the role of fortune versus character etc.

As we noticed before, the VA makes the reader inquisitive through the story about Pythagoras. Plutarch uses this technique only once, viz. in telling the rather long story about Damon in the beginning of the *Cimon–Lucullus*. But there is a noticeable difference. In the VA, as in the *Cimon–Lucullus*, the reader is somewhat at a loss about the purpose of this narration; but in the end, in the VA it serves as a leg up for the climactic introduction of the actual subject, viz. Apollonius, whilst in the *Cimon–Lucullus* it is but an *aition* for the presence of a statue of Lucullus at Chaeronea, and an explanation for the choice of Lucullus as a subject for a biography: Plutarch feels obliged! Paradoxically, Philostratus invites for a *synkrisis*, whereas Plutarch's patriotism explains the choice of a hero for whom it apparently (σκοποῦντι, παρελείπομεν) was not easy to find a match.

Presenting the case

1. Both Plutarch and Philostratus confront their reader with a subject from the past. But it is remarkable how Plutarch draws this subject into the present time—of himself, and his reader:

...I am continuing the work and delighting in it... using history as a mirror and endeavouring in a manner to fashion and adorn my life in conformity with the virtues therein depicted. For the result is like nothing else than daily living and associating together (συνδιαιτῆσει καὶ συμβιώσει), when I receive and welcome each subject of my history in turn as a guest (ἐπιξενούμενον), and observe carefully (ἀναθεωρῶμεν) 'how large he was and of what mien'. (*Timoleon* I 1–2).

Such (warm) actualisation is absent from the explicit discourse of the proem of the VA.

2. Plutarch tends to present the subject of his *Lives*, that is, the lives of particular historical persons, as a problem with an abstract and general dimension; in other words, he presents it as a philosophical *quaestio*, a *quaestio infinita*. The proem of the VA does not show this tendency: the subject is a particular and individual question, a *quaestio finita*; this proem states that Apollonius was superior to Pythagoras and announces the narration of his life as a piece of evidence. Consequently, the proem of the VA stresses the completeness and accuracy of the upcoming narration, whilst Plutarch stresses several times that he has selected facts (ἐπιτέμνειν) in presenting the case; for him, the facts that do not serve his purpose can be left out as ἄχρηστος ἱστορία.

3. Plutarch's philosophical quest, however, is not merely theoretical and contemplative, it is also active and protreptic (only rarely apotrepetic).³² The programmatic proem of the *Life of Pericles* states:³³ the contemplation, or better the investigation (ἱστορία) of the manifestations of the good (the παραδείγματα) should in the end affect the reader's character and his daily conduct. This means that, in general, Plutarch presents his case in a laudatory vein as if his subject were a *certum*, but that he nevertheless leaves ample occasion for the reader to apply his critical judgement to the subject as a *dubium*. Almost the contrary holds for the proem of the VA, where the apodictic tone leaves little room for doubt: the superiority of Apollonius' philosophy is a *certum* that urges the reader to enjoy the contemplation of the subject, and that should be honoured (τιμή); the alternative of διαβολή is rejected. But the reader should also enjoy the style of the narrative: Philostratus reminds the reader of his stylistic achievement, whilst Plutarch, in view of his high ethical goal, rejects "jealous rivalry with other writers in matters of style as altogether undignified and pedantic" (*Nicias* I 4), although one cannot neglect the fact that Plutarch did actually pay attention to literary refinement. All this invites us to think of the proem of the VA as being more epideictic than Plutarch's proems and Plutarch's proems as being more deliberative than the one of the VA.

My conclusion is a teasing paradox: inasmuch as the Second Sophistic is about using the mirror of the past to deal with contemporary issues, about making the glorious past effective in the process of coming to

³² The only exceptions are the *Life of Demetrius* and the *Life of Sulla* (for the latter, see Stadter 1992).

³³ A complete analysis of this proem is to be found in Van der Stockt 1992:32–37.

terms with the present, then Plutarch, in his formal prooemia, is a Sophist second to no other. But inasmuch as the Second Sophistic is about displaying epideictic self-confidence and outspoken idolatry for a Pythagorean, Philostratus in his proem of the *VA* outshines Plutarch.

Pythagorean Lives: the VA and Plutarch's Life of Numa

But what if Plutarch had fancied editing “a Pythagorean βίος”? What would he have made of it? Would his main character be something like the Pythagorean Apollonius? As it happens, Plutarch wrote a “Pythagorean life”, viz. the *Life of Numa*. Actually, Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism are relatively more present in the *Life of Numa* than in the *VA*; of the 22 chapters of the *Life of Numa* 5 are almost entirely devoted to Pythagoras or mention him, viz. chapters 1, 8, 11, 14, 22: “Numa-Pythagoras” is the *Leitmotiv* of this *Life* (Flacelière 1964:176).

It is interesting to notice that the *Life of Numa*, like the *VA*, raises serious questions about chronology, historicity and reliability. The relation between Numa and Pythagoras may serve as an illustration. Against his better judgement, Plutarch casts doubts on the chronology of Numa. He knew perfectly well that Rome was founded in 753, and that Numa was king from 715 to 673, and on the other hand that Pythagoras (ca. 580–500) “lived as many as five generations” (*Numa* I 2) after Numa. So Plutarch knew that it would be an anachronism to suggest that Numa was inspired by Pythagoras. Yet that is exactly what he does! Although he acknowledges that “the genealogies seem to be made out accurately (ἀκριβῶς) (*Numa* I 1), he ventures to cast doubts on the chronology—making a certain chronographer, Clodius, his ally, or being sceptical about the list of victors in the Olympic games, published by Hippias of Elis—only to conclude that “chronology is hard to fix” (*Numa* I 4: τοὺς χρόνους ἐξακριβῶσαι χαλεπὸν ἐστὶ). This worrying observation sounds like the serious concern of a biographer, but it is actually a hypocritical manoeuvre to make the anachronism acceptable, for Plutarch wanted to leave open the possibility that Greek philosophy and *paideia* were present in the heart of Rome from its very beginning (Flacelière 1948:407 and 1964:169). It must be said that Plutarch, throughout the *Numa* (and unlike Philostratus in the *VA*) shows an uneasy conscience, like in VIII 10: “however, since the matter of Numa’s acquaintance with Pythagoras is involved in much dispute, to discuss it at greater length, and to win belief for it, would savour of

youthful contentiousness (μειρακιώδους φιλονεικίας).” Still, his final plea for the possibility of Numa’s acquaintance with Pythagoras sounds like this: “we may well be indulgent with those who are eager to prove, on the basis of so many resemblances between them, that Numa was acquainted with Pythagoras” (XXII 4).

So much for the *akribeia* of the biographer: it would seem that he is willing to sacrifice it for his higher goal.³⁴ Having established these criteria, many similarities between Numa and Pythagoras or Apollonius are not surprising. I only point smilingly at the fact that in *Numa* I 3 it is suggested that the Pythagoras who was acquainted with Numa was... another Pythagoras; this reminds one of the statement about the original identity of Pythagoras in *VA* I 1. In Numa’s birth (*Numa* III 4), like in that of Apollonius, a divine intervention seems discernable. As a pupil of Pythagoras, Numa, like Apollonius, was a philosopher (*Numa* III 5); he was a νομοθέτης, and so was Pythagoras in the eyes of his pupils (*VA* I 3). Like Pythagoras, he kept the meaning of some precepts hidden (*Numa* VIII 6, XIV 3), and did not stain the altars of the gods with blood (*Numa* XIV). Like Apollonius, Numa is involved in teaching priests about ritual (*Numa* VII 4, IX 1, XII 3, XIV 1), and, like Apollonius, he works miracles (*Numa* XV 2–3).

But enough is enough. For in the tradition about Numa there is an element that appears also in the legend about Pythagoras and that shocks Plutarch’s convictions. In the *VA* Pythagoras claims that he was visited by Apollo, Athena, the Muses and other gods; it is said that his pupils honoured him as an envoy from Zeus. Likewise, the *Numa* legend claims that Numa consorted with the nymph Egeria (*Numa* IV 2), that he captured demons and was visited by Zeus (*Numa* XV), and that his oracular teachings came from the Muses. But Plutarch labels those legends about Numa as “fabulous and ridiculous stories” (*Numa* XV). Would he have said the same about Pythagoras and Empedocles, whom the *VA* claims to be a follower of Pythagoras? Or about Socrates, whose *daimonion* gave him foreknowledge?

I am afraid he would. In the dialogue *De genio Socratis*, Galaxidorus exclaims:³⁵

³⁴ It is very tempting to say that his ‘higher goal’ is the establishment of “Truth” rather than (and even in spite of) “Fact”; that might very well have been the purpose of Philostratus as well: see Francis 1998:432 and 437.

³⁵ I quote the translation of De Lacy–Einarson 1959:401–405.

How hard is it to find a man untainted with humbug and superstition! Some, through no desire of their own, succumb to these disorders from ignorance or weakness, whereas others, to be reputed the favourites of heaven and above the common sort, invest their doings with a character of sanctity, hiding what occurs to their intelligence behind a pretence of dreams and apparitions and the like mummery. For men engaged in public affairs and compelled to live at the caprice of a self-willed and licentious mob this may have its use—to treat the superstition of the populace as a bridle...; but for philosophy such outward seeming appears not only unseemly but in open conflict with her claims. Professing to teach the whole of the good and the profitable by the sole use of reason, she nevertheless withdraws as if in contempt from reason as the government of conduct, and scorning demonstration, where her chief excellence is supposed to lie, resorts to divination and the visions seen in dreams, wherein the least of men is often no less rewarded than the greatest. For this reason... I think your friend Socrates embraced a manner of teaching and speaking that had more of the true philosophic stamp; as for the humbug, the mere vapour as it were of philosophy, he sent it flying to the sophists. [...] Things really divine he by no means ignored; but he took philosophy, left by Pythagoras and his company a prey to phantoms, fables and superstition, and by Empedocles in a wild state of exaltation, and trained her to face reality with steadfast understanding, as it were, and to rely on sober reason in the pursuit of truth (579F–580C).

It has been noticed by commentators and editors that this passage strongly reminds one of Plutarch's critique of the Numa legend in the *Life of Numa* (IV), and particularly of Numa's divination, prophecies and commerce with the divine, and the sophistic use of it by rulers. Plutarch's rationalism as well as his reverence for the divine make him strongly averse to this kind of religiosity that feeds on superstition. Inasmuch as Plutarch agrees with Galaxidorus, one can apply the statement of Babut (1988:398) about Galaxidorus to Plutarch himself: "<il> incarne sans doute la réaction rationaliste de certains cercles socratiques contre une interprétation de l'héritage socratique jugée trop entachée de religiosité et trop influencée par le pythagorisme." If this is Plutarch's critique on Pythagoras and on Numa, it must also have been his critique on Apollonius, if he knew him. If he had been able to read the proem of the VA, he would have stopped his reading there and scornfully exclaimed: "How hard it is to find a man untainted with humbug and superstition! I will make not the slightest mention of these guys in my books!"

PART TWO

HISTORICAL, RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS

FOLKLORE VERSUS FAKELORE:
SOME PROBLEMS IN THE *LIFE OF APOLLONIUS*

GRAHAM ANDERSON

The so-called *Life* of Apollonius of Tyana has light to throw on a variety of aspects of cultural and religious history of the Early Roman Empire. It is the principal source, or rather group of sources, for the ever-elusive Apollonius himself, and for the way the image of a first-century pagan holy man or religious consultant can be overlaid by a heavy veneer of sophistic rhetoric and manipulation. But it is much less often seen as an entrée into an opaque world of ancient folklore, a field as ambiguous and elastic as the figure of the sage himself.

It is possible to view Apollonius through categorisations such as Pythagorean philosophy, Olympian cults, ancient medicine, and a number of others in such a way as to exclude folklore from the reckoning altogether: but the latter category embraces a wide range of beliefs and practices across the Roman World from Cadiz to the borders of North India. Apollonius' range of interests extends comfortably over traditional popular beliefs and practices on which the sage is sure to have either an alleged expertise or an opinion. In a good many cases we can claim to have other sources which can offer limited corroboration, at least in part, of a detail paraded by Philostratus. His accounts can be equally interesting to the classicist and the folklorist alike, whether he is talking about the religious life of a city in Asia Minor, an altar at Gadeira or an exorcism in Ethiopia.

We might begin by attempting to define the scope of the folklore we are setting out to study. It might be said to relate to any material whose context of origin and transmission is anonymous and popular. The very nature of Philostratus as an author makes our classification of such evidence treacherous to determine, as his highly artificial and educated veneer must affect both his selection and treatment of material;¹ we must also suspect that Apollonius' own manner of self-presentation does not help: he often seems to emerge from Philostratus as cryptically

¹ See in general Anderson 1986:121–239 *passim*.

authoritarian, and it can be hard to reconstruct the thought-world of individual episodes. At the same time it should be urged that sophists of the high Empire like Philostratus had their own enthusiasms for what they might see in particular of the Greek past, or for whatever they could assimilate to it.

Greek and Caucasian traditions of Prometheus

We can begin with an instance perhaps rather easily taken for granted. In the account of Apollonius' journey through the Caucasus, we are told (II 3) that the barbarians tell the same myths about the mountain as the Greeks do in their poems, and that Prometheus was bound there because of his benevolence to mankind, whether high up on the mountain or in a cave pointed out at the foot in which they say he was imprisoned. We can actually test Philostratus' testimony at least in part against two of a series of 'Prometheus' type tales recorded in the Caucasus in modern times. The following example belongs to a Circassian group:²

The storm-god Paqua takes offence because the Narts do not sacrifice to him: he deprives them of fire. Their champion Nasran challenges him, but is strung up on a mountain-top and an enormous eagle feeds on his chest. The Narts mount an attack, but a whole squad of eagles drives them back; in desperation they turn to their hero Pataraz, who kills the original eagle, defeats other fighters for Paqua, and restores fire to the Narts.

I agree with Colarusso that this is unlikely to be a mere reflection of a Russian collection of Greek myths transmitted to the Caucasus. The staple of Greek accounts since Hesiod is that Prometheus is punished for the cunning theft of fire. This is conspicuously missing in the text here paraphrased, and the restoration of fire is assigned instead to the Heracles-figure Pataraz.

As to the other version, that Prometheus is imprisoned in a cave, we have a further Circassian version where the same Nasran is bound to a pillar which sinks into the earth:³

O Nart Nasran,
the one who was brought up onto the mountain,
the Eagle flies above you...

² Collected in Colarusso 2002, Saga 34, 158–163.

³ Colarusso 2002, Saga 35, 168f.

the dog, lying near you,
 gnaws at your chains, making them thinner...
 All the early-rising blacksmiths...
 They strike upon their anvils
 and all your chains are restored.

This would seem to corroborate Philostratus' account of an incarceration low down; the rest of the detail finds corroboration in Moses of Chorene's Late Antique *Armenian History*, and so can be established as ancient:⁴

The old women tell equally of Ardavazt that he is imprisoned in a cavern, loaded with iron chains: two dogs gnaw continually at his chains, and he tries to escape to bring devastation into the world. But at the noise of hammer blows of the smiths, his chains, they say, are renewed. That is why to this day many smiths, in accordance with the tale, strike their anvil three or four times on the first day of the week, to strengthen, so they say, the chains of Ardavazt.

Ardavazt is actually a legendary king cursed by his father and said to have fallen down a cleft in the ground, but the story is clearly the same as that told of the Prometheus-figure Nasran himself recycled in the Armenian chronicler as historical legend. There is however enough convergence to suggest that modern Caucasian traditions of Prometheus do indeed contain genuinely ancient material. We should trust the claim that a local tradition of Prometheus and Heracles existed as Philostratus' sources describe it. We should however note that the Philostratean account does not tell the whole story: the imprisonment tradition in Moses of Chorene and some of the Nart sagas seems to imply an incarcerated figure who is an enemy of mankind and has to be contained. Philostratus also comments on the continued hostility of the local population to eagles. This has been doubted *ex silentio*, but there is no doubt from Colarusso's first example that the Narts take on the eagles as a breed, rather than simply the initial eagle set to torment their hero.

Here, then, we have a typical outcome for the student of folklore in Philostratus: he will often contain unusual details which cannot simply be dismissed out of hand; but when partly corroborative information is added, we are all too often left with a picture which is still incomplete or puzzling in some sense.

⁴ 2.58.3f., *FGrH* 679 F12.

Philostratus seems not to demur at the idea of a buried Prometheus, but at V 16 Apollonius dismisses two kinds of similar stories in a discourse to his disciple Menippus: that Typho or Enceladus is imprisoned under Etna (following the portents in V 13, suggesting that Typho is threatening disaster for Sicily, and so causes volcanic eruption). Apollonius believes that giants existed, on the evidence of giant bones, but does not believe that the giants challenged the gods to the extent of assaulting heaven. He is likewise sceptical about Etna as the forge of Hephaestus, or that the homes of the Blest, surrounded by fire, are there, and elects for the kind of purely rational and physical explanation familiar from discussions of *Naturales Quaestiones*. We might be tempted to ask why Apollonius seems not to challenge the imprisonment of Prometheus but will not accept those of Typho or Enceladus. It may well simply be because the Caucasian Prometheus is the friend of mankind, while the other two are felt to be impious: we might compare Apollonius' similar approval of the Indian Tantalus-figure (III 25). But again we cannot really impose a total consistency on either the sage or his biographer.

Healing and Exorcism tales

Popular traditions of spectacular public displays against disease, demonic possession, or both offer a staple in the folklore of hagiography. We might begin with a traditional tale of resurrection from the dead, a more or less routine 'use' of a holy man. Fairly close analogues are to hand, not only in the healing of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5.35–43),⁵ but also in an episode from Apuleius' *Florida* (19), where such an intervention is attributed to the physician Asclepiades. The episode is presented by Philostratus as a casual one off: *Κάκεϊνο Ἀπολλωνίου θαῦμα* ("and here is another of Apollonius' miracles", VA IV 45).⁶ All three accounts are structured in a similar way: the client is socially prominent, so that the episode attracts popular attention; the holy man intervenes when others have given or are giving up hope; and in Mark and the VA the intervention is a matter of something whispered to the victim. Philostratus is at pains to rationalise: there was drizzle, and so steam

⁵ For general comparison between the VA and the Christian Gospels, see still Petzke 1970.

⁶ The text cited is that of C.P. Jones, *LCL* 2005.

was rising from the face of the deceased (so that Apollonius could see what the doctors had missed); or it was a genuine case of resurrection. Interestingly Philostratus attributes the divided opinions to the bystanders themselves. A cliché of this story-type presented as a popular miracle account is that bystanders to a holy man should be amazed; the more sophisticated veneer of Philostratus can invest the crowd with rather more discrimination. By contrast, in the case of Jairus' daughter, Jesus Christ pronounces in advance and without examining the patient at all, that she is only asleep, a sequence of events which enables the event to be presented as a miracle at least of clairvoyance.

In what sense is Philostratus' account to be seen as 'folklore'? The episode is apparently reported from local, possibly oral tradition (it is not attributed to Damis). To us it is standard paramedical procedure to ask a comatose patient's name, then try to bring the patient round; it is presumably something that was always 'worth a try' (and not liable to damage the prestige of the executant if it produced no results). But it may be a telling detail that Apollonius is not reported as admitting what signs he might have noticed. There is an air of obfuscation, though a welcome lack of Philostratus' often persistent rhetoric. On occasion we catch a glimpse of a world of even less ambiguous folk medicine, as when a clinic of the *brachmanes* recommends the easing of a woman's labour by her husband's releasing a live hare during the labour (III 39). We are not told why this should be thought effective, but might presume the application of a 'sympathetic' principle: as the hare is swift, so will be the foetus, where we ourselves would attribute any (unpredictable!) obstetric outcome to the sheer shock and surprise to the mother.

There is a similar degree of convergence with popular material in Apollonius' treatment of exorcism, with once more a certain viewpoint or detail which is foreign to popular hagiography (IV 20). The account is once more generally similar to New Testament exorcisms, with the holy man addressing the inner demon directly and ordering it out of the victim;⁷ but the demon in taking its leave rather tellingly knocks over a statue in an Athenian portico, where a possessed victim in the Gospels might more readily stampede a herd of swine (Mark 5.1–17); and the disruptive Corcyrean youth himself traces his ancestry to the Phaeacian Alcinous, no less. We might be tempted to say that this is simply the

⁷ A different procedure is adopted in III 38, where Apollonius conducts an exorcism by a letter, apparently with the force of a curse against the demon.

'sophistic décor' imposed by Philostratus himself; but the case of Aelius Aristides or the philosophers parodied in Lucian's *Philopseudes* should serve to remind us that belief in demonology and demons pervades Graeco-Roman imperial society as a whole.

The Sage and the Pillars of Heracles

Sometimes it is difficult to extrapolate a great deal from Philostratus' reports. At V 5 we seem to have a typical antiquarian stance of Apollonius: a temple of Heracles at Gadeira, or what purports to be such, is described, with the revealing aside that 'Damis' is claimed to say that he could not see what a golden belt of Telamonian Teucer was doing there, nor could he find a satisfactory local explanation: the priests could offer no elucidation of their own, and so we have the cue for Apollonius himself to display his own brand of 'wisdom':

"οὐ ξυγχορεῖ μοι" ἔφη "ὁ Ἡρακλῆς ὁ Αἰγύπτιος μὴ οὐ λέγειν, ὅποσα οἶδα· Γῆς καὶ Ὠκεανοῦ ξύνδεσμοι αἶδε αἱ στήλαι εἰσιν, ἐπεγράψατο δὲ αὐτὰς ἐκεῖνος ἐν Μοιρῶν οἴκῳ, ὥς μήτε νεῖκος τοῖς στοιχείοις ἐγγένοιτο μήτε ἀτιμάσειαν τὴν φιλότητα, ἣν ἀλλήλων ἴσχουσιν."

The Egyptian Heracles does not let me hide all I know: these pillars are the bindings that fasten Earth and Ocean together, and he (Heracles) set his inscription on them in the house of the Fates, to ensure that there might be no strife between the elements, and that they should not dishonour the affection that they have for each other.

It is difficult to find the measure of this, or how it squares with the description of the pillars themselves that precedes. Why should Apollonius withhold belief from local traditions about Typho or Prometheus and believe in this Egyptian Heracles? We are not told the basis of his authority, only that of course he has it.

At other times, however, Philostratus' data does afford us a quite new insight into the formation of a traditional belief. We are used to the idea of Indian Holy Men practising 'levitation', as a popular cliché of Western perception of Indian meditative practices. But Philostratus does actually offer a description (III 17) of the procedure: we are told that the Brachmanes stand round in a circle, and that each of them strikes the ground with a stave, whereupon the ground arches like a wave of the sea, and that the participants are then projected to the height of two cubits into the air. Whatever might be the authenticity of the practice, there can be no doubt at all about its practicality: Philostratus

is describing nothing more remarkable than the trampoline effect of a sprung floor.

Apollonius and the Beggar at Ephesus

Some of the most telling information is presented in the short self-contained chapters detailing Philostratus' dealings with cities, where the sage could operate in a public arena. A typically 'odd' performance is embodied in Philostratus' report of Apollonius' encounter with the beggar at Ephesus. As the biographer presents the incident, we are told that Apollonius directed the local population to the theatre, and instructed them to stone an old beggar, to their justifiable horror. When the beggar flashes his eyes, they recognise him as a disease demon and go ahead with the stoning. When the stones are removed there is the corpse of a large dog; the incident happens near a statue of Heracles *Alexikakos*. The whole episode has the feel of a seventeenth-century witch-hunt, with all the manipulation of self-fulfilling prophecy: the fear and panic in the eyes of the terrified victim are 'read' as evidence of evil or demonic nature, and the mutilated corpse is 're-interpreted' as that of a large dog. It has been noted that a possible ingredient would be that the corpse of the dog would be explained if the beggar near the statue of Heracles with his wallet and bread is simply a Cynic philosopher (κύων) and that the local tradition has for example merged the stoning of a dog as the supposed source of infection with a tale of Apollonius' rivalry towards a Cynic philosopher.⁸ But Philostratus himself is always anxious to exculpate Apollonius, and he probably received the story in its current form, conveniently presenting the sage's judgement as 'vindicated' by the appearance of the corpse of the dog. The sage's image would have been further enhanced by Philostratus' suggestion that he was invited as a 'plague-buster' and came with no-sooner-said-than-done speed in the manner of Pythagoras' bilocation at Thurii and Metapontum.

Apollonius the Folklorist? The Eretrians at Cissia

The case of the Eretrians of Cissia presents traditional lore in a familiar way: the holy man, or rather the travelling scholar, discovers evocative

⁸ Anderson 1986:140–141.

'survivals'. Apollonius is warned by a dream of the plight of the Cissians (fish out of water supplicate a passing dolphin): the fish turn out to be a stranded community of Eretrians, transported by Darius to Cissia, north of the Persian gulf (Herodotus 6.99f.), and living in an area with strong soil contamination. There are tombs in (almost) Greek script and (allegedly) a funerary epigram, as well as carvings of their original occupations; Apollonius restores the tombs after his usual manner, offers funerary offerings, and petitions the king to protect the survivors from their predatory neighbours (I 24).

Here, then, we may have at least a trace of quite genuine cultural history, but of a kind almost suspiciously dear to the collective psyche of the Second Sophistic: Apollonius had discovered 'ancient' Greeks on the periphery of civilisation, with all the emotional 'pull' of a community far from home: one thinks of Dawkins' reports of the language and folklore of Greek communities in Anatolia,⁹ or the traces of still Welsh-speaking enclaves in Argentina. There is a good deal of décor: Philostratus (or Apollonius) cannot resist the gibe that the Persians paid for the transportation of the Eretrians with the loss of their fleet in the hollows of Euboea: there is reference likewise to Apollonius' correspondence with the sophist Scopelian on a subject guaranteed to generate sophistic emotion.

For Philostratus at least a no less emotive episode is that of the necromancy at the tomb of Achilles in the Troad: Apollonius practices a nocturnal ritual which conjures the ghost of Achilles who agrees to answer five 'Trojan Questions': some of these may have a conspicuously 'literary' flavour (concerning Palamedes, for example), but one at least concerns a warning to the people of the Thracian Chersonese to resume rites in honour of Achilles that have been allowed to fall into desuetude.¹⁰

As usual there is a sense of the aggrandisement of Apollonius himself, who is slow to divulge to the ever-curious 'Damis' how he had fared with Achilles, of whom he is of course a kindred spirit. Elsewhere, in the *Heroicus*, Philostratus expands at considerable length on the range of material here:¹¹ but one might feel that few religious or cultural tourists could forbear to make some gesture at this most emotive of sites of

⁹ Dawkins 1916.

¹⁰ On the practice itself, see now Ogden 2001:122f. and *passim*.

¹¹ On the implications of the overlap, Solmsen 1940:558–569.

Greek identity: a grand necromantic gesture would certainly have been expected here of all places.

The Problem of Buried Treasure

Some of Apollonius' discussions in the apparently literary 'worked-up' dialogues can be shown to have at least traces of folkloric analogues. At Taxila the local Indian king Phraotes puts a conundrum to Apollonius: two men quarrel over land sold by one to the other and subsequently found to contain treasure (II 39), which both claim: to whom should the treasure be given? According to Apollonius, to the one who has led the better life: the seller was a villain, the buyer a pious man, and hence entitled to the treasure.

The story, or material very close to it, does occur in fairy tale form in modern vernacular contexts as an international folk tale in its own right (Aarne-Thompson Types 734/734A: a just poor man is to receive a pot of treasure, while for his greedy neighbour it becomes a pot of snakes). It can also be shown that the setting as a moral puzzle occurs as early Talmudic tradition,¹² as the discussion between King Kazia and Alexander the Great (it is Kazia who in essence plays the part of the Sage). Alexander finds a just race beyond the Dark Mountains (not unlike the exotic location of Apollonius in India) where the same situation is presented in a completely opposite way: in the Talmud both of the 'claimants' wish to uphold justice by giving the treasure to the other, and the king suggests marrying off their respective offspring to each other to solve the problem. Alexander disgraces himself in front of his interlocutor by saying that in his country the King would claim the treasure for himself and deal harshly with the disputants, a situation the wise interlocutor regards as completely at variance with divine justice. Here there has clearly been considerable development and manipulation of the initial 'problem': but its solution has attained the status of a wisdom enigma in the popular repertoire at a very early stage. We could claim in this case independent evolution: this is after all the sort of conundrum that kings or judges could expect to face in real life; but that does not detract from its possibilities as a popular and transmissible theme.

¹² Talmud Yer.B.M.II.8C, Gen.R.xxxiii; Pesik; Lev. R.; Tan, Emor, 6; see *Jewish Encyclopedia.com* s.v. Alexander the Great.

Some animal lore

Many of the other 'folkloric' interludes in Philostratus' *Life* relate to observation, real or alleged, of the nature and behaviour of animals: Apollonius will 'divine' why a flock of sparrows is excited, hardly a spectacular feat for someone who claims to have learned the language of birds. The taming of the satyr in Ethiopia is one of a traditional and migratory sort: we know of analogues as early as Gilgamesh, and the classic example of King Midas intoxicating the satyr, which is explicitly invoked by Apollonius himself on this occasion (VI 27). The interesting detail in Philostratus' presentation lies in the aside:

ὁ δ' οἶμαι, τῆς μητρὸς ἀκηκοώς, ὅτι σάτυρος οἴνω θηρευθεὶς, ἐπειδὴν ἐς ὕπνον καταπέσῃ, σωφρονεῖ καὶ διαλλάττεται.

Now Midas had I suppose heard from his mother that a satyr, trapped with wine, falls asleep and then sobers up and relaxes.

The suggestion seems to be that this is a traditional domestic remedy; Philostratus himself explicitly hazards this opinion, and then gives a useful clue as to why: Philostratus harks back to the experience of the mother of a friend of his in his native Lemnos, who had been haunted by a 'satyr', who wore a tightly-fitting fawn skin. Philostratus' occasional reminiscences of Lemnos serve as a point of reference for unnatural events: there and not Athens is where he is likely to have experienced the lore of the countryside.

The tame lion identified as Amasis of Egypt is rather more unusual (VA V 42), but unexceptionable enough for a believer in Pythagorean metempsychosis. Again we should be wise to ask 'why that particular Pharaoh?'. One might suspect that the Philhellenism of Philostratus or even of Apollonius himself might be responsible for the choice of so conspicuously Philhellene a ruler. The account itself makes perfectly clear that all depends upon the sage's own interpretation: the beast reacts to the name Amasis, or so Apollonius would have his audience believe.

The Lamia at Corinth

One episode that can be related closely to folktale as such is the episode of the Lamia at Corinth,¹³ where Philostratus seems to imply that the

¹³ On which see Scobie 1977:7–10.

story is already in circulation and requires an enhanced version of his own. A pupil of Apollonius is approached by a seductress, and a sexual relationship ensues with a view to marriage, despite the advice of our puritanical sage. At the wedding feast Apollonius confronts the woman, in reality a demon, the food magically disappears, and she confesses to fattening up her victim with a view to eating him. We have a straight-forward 'Vampire' tale, but with a good deal of philosophical décor superimposed on a story little different from the plight of Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*: there is an enticement by means of magical food.

It is tempting to rationalise the sage's contribution here. It is quite conceivable that there was some basis to the incident: a young woman perhaps with a show of wealth, perhaps a courtesan, represents a rival to the puritanical sage: the moment he publicly charges her with demonic activity her wedding feast dissolves into chaos; simply by laying charges at all, as in the case of the beggar at Ephesus, Apollonius would have linked a current rivalry of his own to a fear of traditional demonic lore. The charge is once more self-fulfilling.

Outside Philostratus

It is however outside the pages of the VA that a more undisguised species of folklore is to be found. Byzantine chronicle-tradition repeats a number of variations on the idea that Apollonius enjoyed a high reputation for *telesmata*, talismans, in dealing with cities, in particular Byzantium itself, (unmentioned by Philostratus), and Syrian Antioch.¹⁴ A typical cross-section of the sage's activities at Byzantium and Syrian Antioch is reported by John Malalas in the sixth century.¹⁵ The talismans requested at Antioch, which Malalas knew well, included one on the east gate against the North Wind; one inside the city against scorpions: a bronze scorpion on a small column in the centre of the city. One against gnats is described in more detail: Apollonius decided that on the seventh of the month Daisios, the day of the Grastes horse race, all the citizens had to brandish at the end of a wand a little lead image suggestive of Ares, from which hung on a reddish skin a little shield and a little sword attached by a linen thread. They were to cry as they entered: "The City is to be without gnats!" What seems to be envisaged is a *tintinabulum*

¹⁴ Summary in Petzke 1970:24–28. Discussion, with extensive translation, in Dulière 1970:247–277.

¹⁵ Chronographia X, 51 ed. Thurn 2000, PG 97.400–403.

routinely used to drive away evil spirits. But on this occasion he is unable to restore a talisman set up in the reign of Gaius by one Deborrius against earthquakes, and the sage prophesies further disturbances. The picture as far as we have it suggests a repertoire of activity comparable to that of the Moses-with-the-rod-of-Aaron controlling Egyptian plague or flood in the Old Testament book of Exodus 7–14, in other words authentic specialisms of a vernacular Near Eastern holy man, the sort of activities which Philostratus does not choose to detail if indeed he knows them: no doubt this is for fear of endorsing the accusations levelled at Apollonius of *goēteia*, wizardry. It is in just such a context that Apollonius enters into the realms of the apocryphal folktale: from Anastasius Sinaita (seventh century) we have the tale of his competition with Julianus the thaumaturge and Apuleius to cure a plague in Rome in the minimum time (*Quaestio* 20, PG 89.524D–525C).¹⁶

What conclusions can be drawn from the folklore surrounding Apollonius? Philostratus has preserved a good deal, especially in short episodic vignettes loosely strung together inside or outside the large blocks of material on the encounters with Indian and Egyptian sages and the political adventures with Roman Emperors. Our information or ability to understand it and make appropriate comparisons is probably best where there has been least opportunity for Philostratus to interfere with his rhetorical set pieces; and the overall picture is usefully varied. We have Apollonius faced with traces of a Greek community in Persia; we have probably authentic convergence of Greek and Caucasian tradition on Prometheus; we have the routine miracle accounts we expect of a West Asiatic holy man; we have the traditional apotropaic activities against plague or earthquake. But in each case we must be careful to ask ‘why this detail?’ or ‘what is Philostratus’ angle or addition?’. Even the most innocent looking detail of what *ought* to be genuine folklore can be seen as literary, sophisticated, and hence suspect: Apollonius claims what we might call an *anilis fabula* about the origins of Aesopic Fable, when he claims that his own mother had told him how Hermes had distributed all the literary genres, and there was still nothing for Aesop, until he remembered the fables Maia his own mother had taught him, and so gave Aesop the authorship of this kind of tale (VA V 15). The story itself is simple and naive enough, and has an air of ‘songs

¹⁶ Penella 1978:414f.

my mother taught me'. But as so often around Apollonius, some sort of artifice seems to intrude: had Apollonius' mother been reading the myth in Plato's *Protagoras* just beforehand? As all too often, it is a short step from folklore to fakelore. We must be prepared for the possibility in case after case that Philostratus can preserve genuine tradition or thicken popular material with literary elements, and that we cannot always hope to distinguish the strands.

Nonetheless there is much here for the folklorist, aside from any illumination of Apollonius. We can say that there was a report of a vernacular tradition of Prometheus in the Caucasus, so that there should no longer be a need for Caucasian folklorists to have to defend their antiquity; we can add an unusual addition to Opie and Tatem's collection on the folklore of the hare; we can point to a much older embryo of Aarne-Thompson Type 734/734A; we can advance a disarmingly literal exploration of Indian levitation; or we can suspect that a fawn skin outfit for rustic rapists will go some way to 'explaining' or perpetuating rumours of satyrs. The *Life* deserves to be a great deal better known to folklorists than is currently the case.

APOLLONIUS' ASCENSION

JAAP-JAN FLINTERMAN

Introduction

The final chapters of the *Life of Apollonius* (VIII 29–31) deal with the end of the protagonist's earthly existence. In chapter 28 Apollonius, wishing to leave life unobserved, has sent Damis to Rome, carrying with him a letter for the emperor Nerva. With that piece of information, we are told in chapter 29, Damis' memoirs ended. The dedicated disciple is no longer there, neither to witness his master's departure from life nor to inform Philostratus and his readers about the practicalities of Apollonius' passing away. The author claims that, in providing his account with "its proper ending" (tr. Jones), he is at the mercy of conflicting sources. Of course, we might just as well say that he is released from the limitations imposed by an allegedly reliable record of the hero's vicissitudes.¹ He is free to confront his readers with diverging reports of Apollonius' death—"if he died," he adds, thus paving the way for the story which in his view apparently deserves most attention: Apollonius' ascension from the temple of Dictynna on Crete.

The Cretan tale is preceded by two other versions of Apollonius' demise; all three of them are related in chapter 30. The first is that he died in Ephesus, tended by two female slaves. One of these he manumitted before he passed away; the other one he left at his death as the freedwoman's slave. As Apollonius had told her beforehand, this decision turned out to be to her advantage: in the end, she was bought by a businessman who fell in love with her, made her his lawful wife, and acknowledged his children with her. The second version locates Apollonius' departure from life on the island of Rhodes. Here the sage disappears after having entered the temple of the goddess Athena at Lindus. The report of Apollonius' Rhodian exit is immediately followed by the final and most elaborate version of the end of his life as a mortal. While living on Crete, Apollonius came, at an untimely hour,

¹ Cf. Whitmarsh 2004:427: "...the source limitations are turned to an advantage."

to the temple of Dictynna. The fierce dogs guarding the sanctuary and its riches left him unharmed, but the guardians of the temple were not so kind and put him in chains as a wizard and a robber.² About midnight Apollonius threw off his chains, ran to the doors of the temple which miraculously opened as if to receive him, and entered. In the meantime, he had managed to call his jailors so as not to remain unnoticed: a piece of information that cannot but surprise the reader who remembers that, according to chapter 28, it was his intention to leave life unobserved. The doors closed behind him, as inexplicably as they had opened, and from inside, a maidens' choir was heard, urging Apollonius to ascend to heaven. In chapter 31, the scenery changes: in his native city, the sage appears posthumously to a young man in order to confirm the immortality of the soul as well as to discourage idle curiosity about afterlife.

The bibliography on the final chapters of the *Life* is meagre. Several scholars have pointed out that the version located on Crete amounts to "a full-scale assumption into heaven."³ Discussions exceeding one paragraph are scarce, however,⁴ and although a number of important observations can be found in scholarly literature on *Himmelfahrt*, a further exploration of the episode may repay the effort, if only in directing scholarly attention to issues which until now have not been given their due. There are two topics relating to the end of the earthly existence of the protagonist of the *Life* that I propose to discuss in this paper. The first of these is the claim of bodily ascension itself, explicit in the Cretan version of the sage's demise but already implied in the Lindian version. A comparison with other accounts of assumptions into heaven may serve to bring out the meaning of Apollonius' departure from life as related by Philostratus as well as the significance of a number of details of the stories contained in the final chapters of the *Life*. The most promising cases for comparison are Heracles and Empedocles.⁵ Heracles is the god who assists Apollonius in his endeav-

² This is not the first time that Apollonius is treated like a γόνις by temple personnel; see IV 18 and VIII 19, and cf. Petzke 1970:140n3; Flinterman 1995:61n16; Dickie 2001:159–161.

³ The phrase is Jaś Elsner's (1997:28); cf. Schirren 2005:308: "Apollonios stirbt nicht, sondern wird in seiner ganzen Leiblichkeit entrückt."

⁴ Holland 1925:207–209; Lévy 1927:73f.; Weinreich 1929:295–298; Petzke 1970:183–187; Jones 2004:80; Schirren 2005:306–312.

⁵ And not Pythagoras, about whom ascension stories are lacking, as is correctly pointed out by Schirren 2005:308. Lévy 1926:130–137, esp. 137, and 1927:61–78, esp.

ours. In the speech allegedly prepared for the trial before Domitian, he is given at least part of the credit for two of Apollonius' most notable feats, the liquidation of a demon responsible for a plague in Ephesus and the exposure of a female vampire in Corinth; Apollonius claims that he chose the god as his ξυνεργός.⁶ Empedocles is presented as an exemplary follower of Pythagoras in the first chapter of the *Life*, where his claim to divinity is explicitly mentioned as evidence for his affinity to Pythagoras and, by implication, to Apollonius.⁷ In addition, some material for comparison will be taken from stories about the heavenly ascent of Romulus, which provided a mythic model for the deification of Roman emperors at their death.⁸ After all, in the final sentence of the *Life* (VIII 31.3) Philostratus explicitly compares the sanctuary built for Apollonius at imperial expense with the honours received by emperors themselves.

The second topic I will discuss is the question why the stories about Apollonius' miraculous departure from life are situated in sanctuaries of the goddesses Athena and Dictynna on Rhodes and Crete respectively. Why these goddesses and why these locations? To the best of my knowledge, this question has hardly been touched upon in scholarly literature on the *Life*. Perhaps understandably so, because an acceptable answer is hard to find, and I will not pretend that I am fully satisfied with the suggestions that I shall come up with myself. However, the

72–75, has argued that the *Life of Apollonius* is a pastiche of the *Life of Pythagoras* by the Apollonius—in his view Apollonius of Tyana—frequently referred to by Porphyry and Iamblichus in their respective lives of Pythagoras. According to Lévy, this Apollonian *Life of Pythagoras* contained a story located in Metapontum about an assumption into heaven of Pythagoras which, in Lévy's view, can be reconstructed on the basis of the story about Apollonius' ascension from the Dictynna temple on Crete. His arguments are subtle rather than convincing, and it is hard to believe that the hypothetical story about the ascension of Pythagoras would have left no noticeable trace in the literary tradition. For recent discussions of the Apollonian *Life of Pythagoras* see Staab 2002:228–237; and Radicke's introduction to FGH 1064, 150f.; on the traditions concerning the death of Pythagoras see Bollansée's commentary on FGH 1026 F 25, esp. 276f.

⁶ Philostratus VA VIII 7.28f.; the stories can be found in IV 10 and 25 respectively, where the protagonist himself earns full credit for his achievements. According to Lactantius *Inst.* V 3, Apollonius received cultic veneration in Ephesus under the name of Heracles *Alexikakos*; Bowie 1978:1687 with n. 138 convincingly argues that Lactantius did not draw on Philostratus for this piece of information.

⁷ Philostratus I 1.3, quoting Empedocles DK 31 B 112 = Heraclides of Pontus fr. 77 Wehrli = Diogenes Laertius VIII 62: χαίρετ', ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν θεὸς ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θνητός; cf. the paraphrase of this line in VA VIII 7.18 (= DK 31 A 18). Note the observation by Rohde 1925 II:377–378n3 on Apollonius' ascension: "Die Nachahmung der Erzählung vom Verschwinden des Empedokles liegt auf der Hand."

⁸ See Bickermann 1929:26–28; Price 1987:73f.

question simply forces itself upon the reader, and I cannot but raise the problem hoping that, in the future, others may suggest more satisfactory solutions.

The set of questions outlined in this introduction implies that I will not go into the problem of the extent to which Philostratus drew on pre-existing traditions relating to the end of Apollonius' life—let alone into the question of the historical Apollonius' death. The story located in Ephesus is, of course, the one most likely to succeed in persuading the reader to suspend disbelief, if alone because it is easier to credit Apollonius with employing his clairvoyance for matchmaking⁹ than to believe in his assumption into heaven. Moreover, Ephesus is one of the cities for which a good case can be made that they were actually visited by Apollonius,¹⁰ and it would not make an unlikely candidate or claimant for the location of his farewell to life.¹¹ The focus of this paper will be on the stories of Apollonius' ascension as told by Philostratus, however, and an attempt to understand their meaning is already enough of a challenge without drawing in the pre-Philostratean Apollonius. References to 'Apollonius' should, therefore, be understood as relating to the protagonist of the *Life*.¹²

Aphanismos and Epiphany

It is, of course, indisputable that the Cretan version of Apollonius' departure from life amounts to an assumption into heaven. Moreover, as far as miraculous detail is concerned, it is by far the most rewarding account of the Tyanean's demise,¹³ and in discussing what is supposed to have happened in Dictynna's sanctuary, it will turn out to be

⁹ Not for the first time, if we are to believe Philostratus: cf. the story told in VA VI 39.

¹⁰ Bowie 1978:1687; Dzielska 1986:78f.

¹¹ Cf. Lévy 1927:73n1: "[La version] reproduit suivant toute apparence, au moins en ce qui concerne le lieu, l'histoire réelle."

¹² The explicit introduction of the story of Apollonius' heavenly ascension from Dictynna's temple as a Cretan tale (οἱ δ' ἐν Κρήτῃ φασὶ θαυμασιώτερον ἢ οἱ ἐν Λίνδῳ) is, as Ewen Bowie pointed out during the discussion following my paper at the Brussels conference, a fairly outright way of saying that this is not a true story. What I have tried to demonstrate is that the story, in spite of the admission of its fictional nature, deserves to be understood as an attempt to reaffirm several aspects of the image of Apollonius constructed in the *Life*.

¹³ Cf. Weinreich 1929:297: "Dieser letzte Bericht ist am stärksten aretalogisch aufgeputzt."

necessary to pay ample attention to the extraordinary events preceding and accompanying the ascension itself. Nonetheless, the story about his disappearance in the temple of Athena at Lindus also suggests an assumption into heaven. 'To disappear', ἀφανίζεσθαι, is the crucial word here. According to the thorough study of Gerhard Lohfink, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu*, it was the classical term for assumption into heaven, and the absence of mortal remains is a standard ingredient of ascension stories.¹⁴ The cases of Heracles and Empedocles offer instructive material for comparison. According to Diodorus of Sicily, the companions of Heracles came to the conclusion that the hero had joined the gods when, in the ashes of his pyre, no bones could be found.¹⁵ Empedocles disappeared during the night after a sacrificial feast, at least according to a dialogue by Heraclides of Pontus as paraphrased by Diogenes Laertius: "At daybreak all got up, and Empedocles was the only one missing." After initial confusion, Empedocles' pupil Pausanias, one of the characters in Heraclides' dialogue, concluded that "things beyond expectation had happened to him, and [that] it was their duty to sacrifice to him since he was now a god."¹⁶ What the stories about Heracles and Empedocles illustrate is the notion that disappearing from the face of the earth indicates that the missing person has left to join the gods: disappearance amounts to apotheosis.¹⁷ Philostratus' claim, in the final sentence of the *Life* (VIII 31.3), that during his travels he has never found a tomb or even a cenotaph of Apollonius, thus reproduces a standard ingredient of assumption stories. It must have been understood by his readers as

¹⁴ Lohfink 1971:38 and 41; see also Bickermann 1929:13f.

¹⁵ Diodorus of Sicily IV 38.5; cf. Lohfink 1971:39f.

¹⁶ Heraclides of Pontus fr. 83 Wehrli = Diogenes Laertius VIII 68 (tr. Hicks). On the dialogue, Περὶ τῆς ἄπνου, 'The case of the woman whose breathing had stopped', see Gottschalk 1980:13–36. Heraclides had Pausanias contradict the slanderous story that Empedocles had leapt into the crater of the Etna in order to create, by his very disappearance, the illusion that he had become an immortal; see Heraclides fr. 85 Wehrli = Hippobotus fr. 16 Gigante = Diogenes Laertius VIII 69. Kingsley 1995:233–316, esp. 253–256 has convincingly argued that the scurrilous rumour about Empedocles' attempt to vanish from the earth was a hostile distortion of an older story according to which Empedocles had quite literally immortalized himself by leaping into the Etna, and that the version presented by Heraclides is the result of his 'reworking and bowdlerizing' (Kingsley 1995:235) this older story; cf. Bollansée's comments on FGH 1026 F 62.

¹⁷ The same notion lies behind stories told about Alexander the Great (Arrian *An.* VII 27.3) and Julian the Apostate (Gregory Nazianzen *Or.* V 14). Both were credited by their detractors with a plan to throw themselves into a river when they felt their end approaching, in the hope that their bodily disappearance would be taken to mean that they had departed to the gods; cf. Rohde 1925 II:375n1.

a cautious confirmation of the credibility of Apollonius' bodily ascension. As such, it is singled out for quotation by the author of the *Reply to Hierocles*, in his scathing comments on Philostratus' account of the end of Apollonius' life.¹⁸ The Rhodian and Cretan versions of the sage's demise both imply that he has joined the illustrious company of those who at the end of their mortal existence have been admitted among the immortals.

The absence of mortal remains is not the only feature which Apollonius' departure has in common with other stories about assumptions into heaven. The maidens' choir urging Apollonius to ascend to heaven in the Cretan version finds a parallel in the mighty voice calling Empedocles—a voice that, according to Heraclides, was heard by a witness, who also saw a heavenly light.¹⁹ While in Diogenes Laertius the content of the message for Empedocles is only suggested, however, the girls calling or sending off Apollonius are given a text: "Proceed from earth! Proceed to heaven! Proceed!"²⁰ As far as the identity of the choir is concerned, the reader is left in the dark.²¹ Richard Holland has argued that a heavenly choir calling Apollonius from above rather than a farewell performance is implied, but this suggestion, which would result in an even closer resemblance to the story of Empedocles' disappearance, finds no support in the text. It is, moreover, at odds with the parallels for the use of the verb *στείχειν*, in farewell scenes from tragedy, adduced by Holland himself.²² In discussing the myth and cult of Dictynna we shall return to the maidens' choir. For the moment, it is more opportune to notice a further similarity between the Cretan version of Apollonius' assumption into heaven and Empedocles' departure from life as told by Heraclides: the presence of one or even more eyewitnesses. As ascension

¹⁸ Eusebius *Reply to Hierocles* 44.3. On the significance of Philostratus' claim see also Petzke 1970:186f.

¹⁹ Heraclides of Pontus fr. 83 Wehrli = Diogenes Laertius VIII 68. A further parallel can be found in the divine voice calling Oedipus at the end of his earthly existence: Sophocles OC 1623–1629; cf. Lohfink 1971:45, and see also W. Speyer, "Himmelsstimme," RAC 15:286–303, at 288–290.

²⁰ VIII 30.3: *στεῖχε γὰρ, στεῖχε ἐς οὐρανόν, στεῖχε* (tr. Jones). Holland 1925:208 has pointed out that reading *στεῖχε γὰρ, στεῖχε <δ'> εἰς οὐρανόν, στεῖχε* results in a catalectic cretic tetrameter, a metre perfectly fitting the geographical setting.

²¹ Lévy 1927:74f. conjectures that in Apollonius' hypothetical account of the ascension of Pythagoras, in his view the model of the story in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* (above, n. 5), the maidens were the Muses.

²² Holland 1925:208.

stories are consistently told from an earthly perspective, even a modest amount of elaboration requires the presence of bystanders, and narrative logic goes some way to explain why Philostratus has Apollonius abandon his intention of leaving life unobserved.²³

Apollonius' ascension from Dictynna's temple is preceded by no less than three miracles. At his arrival the fierce watch dogs of the sanctuary which, according to the Cretans, are a match for bears and other wild beasts, do not even bark, but greet him wagging their tails. Around midnight Apollonius, put in chains by the officials of the sanctuary, throws off his fetters. Then, without human intervention, the temple doors open before and close behind him. The first miracle does not need to hold out attention for too long. Mastery over animals is one of the gifts shared by Apollonius with Pythagoras who, according to one of the biographical traditions, even succeeded in converting a she-bear to vegetarianism.²⁴ It is a gift that has been demonstrated by Apollonius before,²⁵ and it surely comes in handy in the present context. We shall return to the dogs when discussing the myth and cult of Dictynna.

The second miracle is also a manifestation of an ability displayed by Apollonius on a previous occasion. The act of self-liberation recalls the episode in Domitian's prison, where Apollonius demonstrated his freedom by taking his leg out of its shackle. The latter feat was the occasion of an explicit recognition by Damis of his master's divine nature,²⁶ and it does not seem too adventurous a reading of the present passage that Apollonius, by throwing off his fetters in the sanctuary of Dictynna, again manifests his superhuman status. But the episode in Domitian's dungeon offers more cues for the reading of the scene described in the penultimate chapter of the *Life*. Apollonius' demonstration in front of Damis is preceded by a personal confrontation with the emperor (VII 32–34), who has the sage's beard and hair shorn off before having him chained and thrown into a dungeon on an accusation of sorcery. Domitian is clearly cast in the role of Pentheus, in the *Bacchants*, imprisoning Dionysus as a sorcerer and an enchanter and cutting off

²³ Lohfink 1971:38. Schirren 2005:308n282 is right, however, in pointing out that Philostratus makes the inconsistency between the sentiment voiced by Apollonius in VIII 28 and his behaviour in VIII 30.3 more explicit than is required by the narrative.

²⁴ Porphyry *VP* 23; Iamblichus *VP* 60; cf. Burkert 1972:142n124.

²⁵ VI 43; cf. Petzke 1970:140n2.

²⁶ VII 38.2.

his hair.²⁷ In Euripides, Dionysus' subsequent self-liberation is the culmination of a series of divine epiphanies.²⁸ Thus, the interpretation of Apollonius' demonstration of his miraculous powers in Domitian's prison as a manifestation of the sage's divine nature, made explicit by Damis, is simultaneously suggested by the Dionysian overtones of the story which, by a percipient reader, can again be heard in the account of his imprisonment as a sorcerer by the guardians of Dictynna's temple and his subsequent escape.²⁹

In his confrontation with Domitian, Apollonius anticipated his act of self-liberation by pointing out the inconsistency in the emperor's behaviour: it is just as impossible to fetter a sorcerer as it is absurd to accuse of sorcery someone whom one is having fettered. Domitian retorted that he would set free his detainee only when he would turn into water, an animal or a tree (VII 34): an unmistakable allusion to the problems experienced by Menelaus and his companions in catching Proteus,³⁰ and at the same time a reference to a story told in one of the opening chapters of the *Life*: during her pregnancy, Apollonius' mother had a vision of an Egyptian god, who revealed himself as Proteus and declared that he was the child to which she would give birth. Commenting on this story, Philostratus had pointed out how versatile Proteus was, forever changing form and defying capture, and he had urged his readers to keep Proteus in mind, especially when his account would show Apollonius capable of extracting himself from hopeless situations.³¹ It is, therefore, with good reason that Apollonius' Protean

²⁷ See VA VII 34, with Euripides *Ba.* 234 (γόνις ἐπιδόξ) and 493. My awareness of the extent of the parallel between the treatment of Apollonius by Domitian and of Dionysus by Pentheus has profited from a discussion with Kristoffel Demoen.

²⁸ Euripides *Ba.* 575–659. On the 'liberating epiphany' of Dionysus see most recently Weaver 2004:44–49; and cf. Weinreich 1929:282–290; Versnel 1990: 165–167.

²⁹ See Weinreich 1929:295–298. Weaver 2004, esp. 281–283 has argued that in cases such as these we should, rather than assuming direct literary influence, reckon with the effect of a more widespread narrative pattern, which he labels the 'Dionysian resistance myth'. In the *Life of Apollonius*, he detects the most outspoken analogy with this myth in the account in Book IV of Apollonius' stay in Rome during the reign of Nero, see Weaver 2004:61n114. For the present purpose, it is not necessary to discuss whether what we are dealing with in the Books VII and VIII amounts to conscious imitation of a scene from Euripides or results from familiarity with a widely known plotline evidenced by a broader set of texts, the more so since Weaver does not question what I have called the Dionysian overtones of liberation scenes such as these; see esp. Weaver 2004:49: "...to conceptualize a miraculous prison-escape in the Greco-Roman world was to invoke its appertaining myth-story concerning Dionysus and his cult."

³⁰ *Od.* IV 456–458; cf. Weinreich 1929:296n16; Schirren 2005:236.

³¹ I 4; see on this chapter most recently Schirren 2005:47–49.

quality is alluded to in the Domitian episode: the allusion anticipates the hero's self-liberation in prison.

As has been observed by several scholars, however, the presentation of Apollonius as an incarnation of Proteus considerably undermines the credibility of the professed apologetic intention of the *Life* as set out in the second chapter of Book I: clearing Apollonius from the charge of sorcery. After all, Proteus was the archetypal sorcerer.³² The allusion to Proteus put into Domitian's mouth therefore alerts the reader to the possible interpretation of the sage's miraculous liberation as an act of sorcery, and the same effect is brought about by the fact that Apollonius takes his leg out off its shackle after having explained to Domitian that sorcerers cannot be fettered.³³ The dismissal of this interpretation as characteristic of simple-minded people such as athletes, merchants, and lovers, in an extended authorial comment following the account of the miracle,³⁴ does not eliminate the seed of suspicion sown in the conversation with the Flavian emperor and budding since the preceding chapter. The story of how Apollonius threw off his fetters in Dictynna's sanctuary is another manifestation of his Protean elusiveness, and it is likely to have raised similar suspicions. To make matters even worse, the breaking of bonds was a rather popular activity among practicing magicians, witness the magical papyri. Especially worthy of note in this connection is a recipe for acquiring an assistant demon who, at the magician's command, "frees from bonds a person chained in prison." Interestingly, the assistant demon also "opens doors," and he "puts dogs to sleep and renders them voiceless" as well.³⁵ On top of that, the timing of Apollonius' self-liberation is rather unhelpful from an apologetic point of view. Sorcerers were believed to have a strong preference for the nocturnal hours, as Apollonius himself admitted in the speech for his defence allegedly prepared for the trial before Domitian.³⁶

³² See Weinreich 1929:296n16; R. Herter, 'Proteus (1)', RE XXIII:940–975, at 967; cf. Flinterman 1995:52; Schirren 2005:48.

³³ VA VII 34 and 38.2; cf. Koskenniemi 1991:13n51; Whitmarsh 2001:228. Eusebius *Reply to Hierocles* 39.2–3 seizes the opportunity with both hands.

³⁴ VII 39; cf. on this passage Flinterman 1995:64f.

³⁵ PGM I 101 and 116f. (tr. O'Neil). I owe this reference to Annelies Cazemier; cf. Graf 1997:108. Weinreich 1929:343–348 discusses miraculous liberation in the magical papyri.

³⁶ VA VIII 7.7; cf. Apuleius *Ap.* 47.3, with the evidence collected by Abt 1908:268–270.

While Apollonius' breaking of his bonds may raise doubts about Philostratus' seriousness (or competence) as an apologist, the third miracle lends itself less easily to a hostile interpretation. The opening and closing of the temple doors should be understood as an act of the goddess, indicating her willingness to admit the sage and her displeasure at the treatment meted out to him by her servants. Rather than a part of Apollonius' self-liberation it is a demonstration by the goddess that Apollonius' presence in her sanctuary is pleasing to her,³⁷ and it constitutes a parallel with the behaviour of a deity in a shrine visited by Apollonius on a previous occasion: the oracle of Trophonius at Lebadea. Here, the priests did not allow Apollonius to consult the oracle, and the sage was compelled to trespass in order to question Trophonius about his philosophical preferences. The god appeared to his priests in a dream and rebuked them for their treatment of Apollonius. In addition, the consultation was extended to an unprecedented length of seven days.³⁸ The opening and closing of the doors of Dictynna's temple are on a par with Trophonius' rebuke to his priests and his preferential treatment of Apollonius. In sum, the miracles preceding Apollonius' ascension from the temple of Dictynna reaffirm the Tyanean's similarity to Pythagoras, his divine nature, and the esteem he is held in by the gods. Together, they serve to convey the suggestion that he is worthy to receive the final honour of assumption into heaven.

In the final chapter of the *Life* (VIII 31), a young student of philosophy at Tyana, who denies the immortality of the soul and of Apollonius, is healed from his errors by a posthumous appearance of the sage.³⁹ An epiphany of the missing person can also be found in several versions of Romulus' assumption into heaven. In both Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Plutarch, Romulus appears to a respected citizen in order to declare that he has ascended to heaven.⁴⁰ In Lucian's *On the Death of Peregrinus* (40), the self-cremation of the protagonist is followed by an epiphany as

³⁷ Weinreich 1929:297 maintained that both in Dionysian liberation miracles and in the *Life* the opening of the doors is directly linked to the breaking of the bonds. He was overlooking the fact that while in e.g. *Ba.* 447–448 the spontaneous opening of the doors of the *prison* is part and parcel of the miraculous liberation, in *VA* VIII 30.3 the liberation has been completed before the opening of the doors of the *temple*.

³⁸ VIII 19.2; cf. on this episode Betz 1983a:579–580.

³⁹ For discussion of this chapter and especially of Apollonius' oracular pronouncement see Schirren 2005:309–312.

⁴⁰ Dionysius of Halicarnassus *AR* II 63.3–4; Plutarch *Rom.* 28.1–3; see also Livy I 16.5–8; cf. Lohfink 1971:45. On the apotheosis of Romulus see P. Habermehl, "Jenseitsreise I (Himmelfahrt) B III: Griechenland/Rom," *RAC* 17:415–432, at 421–424.

well, reported by an old man who goes on to demonstrate his reliability by swearing that he has also seen with his own eyes how a vulture flew up from the pyre—a figment of Lucian's own malicious imagination spread, he claims, by himself a short while before for the benefit of the dimwits! Lucian's parody shows that such epiphanies were, if not a standard ingredient, at least an element one could expect in stories about heavenly ascension.

In comparison with Romulus' epiphany as described by Dionysius and Plutarch, however, Apollonius' posthumous manifestation is rather modest; in fact, it boils down to an oracular dream. The content of Apollonius' posthumous message is, moreover, nothing more than a corroboration of the immortality of the soul combined with a stern advice not to be too inquisitive about things that are beyond a mortal's understanding; the deceased does not claim that he has ascended to heaven, let alone that he has become a god. Here, Philostratus may have tried to cater for readers sharing the sentiments of Plutarch and Cicero, who found the whole idea of bodily ascension a bit too crude and who preferred a spiritualized interpretation of the traditional stories. Plutarch vociferously protests against the notion that perishable bodies could have a share in immortality. The immortal souls of virtuous men, on the other hand, may aspire to divine status and ascend to the gods.⁴¹ Apollonius' posthumous appearance and the content of his message fall short of the expectations raised by the stories about his assumption into heaven. Philostratus may have intended to present his readers with a more palatable alternative as sketched by Plutarch: the ascension of the sage's immortal soul.⁴²

Nevertheless, the *Life* concludes with what certainly is again a standard ingredient of ascension stories: the assertion that the deceased has become the object of cultic veneration.⁴³ The exhortation by Empedocles' pupil Pausanias after his master's disappearance "to sacrifice to him since he was now a god"⁴⁴ exemplifies the phenomenon. In Diodorus' *Library*, Heracles' assumption into heaven is immediately followed by an account of the emergence and evolution of his cult.⁴⁵ It is, therefore, no

⁴¹ Plutarch *Rom.* 28.7–10; Cicero *Rep.* III (100,30–101,4 Ziegler) = Augustine *CD* XXII 4.

⁴² Cf. Lohfink 1971:49 with n. 136.

⁴³ See Lohfink 1971:46–49.

⁴⁴ Diogenes Laertius VIII 68 = Heraclides fr. 83 Wehrli (tr. Hicks).

⁴⁵ Diodorus IV 39.1.

surprise that the final sentence of the *Life* refers to the temple at Tyana built for Apollonius by Caracalla, a temple whose existence was already mentioned in one of the opening chapters of the first book, dealing with the birth of the hero (I 5; cf. Cassius Dio 77.18.4). Philostratus adds that even “emperors have not denied Apollonius the honours of which they themselves were held worthy” (VIII 31.3; tr. Conybeare). Where the highest authorities have spoken, who is the author and who are his readers to demur?

The sanctuary at Tyana links the ending of the *Life* to its opening chapters. As we have noticed before, it is not the only element of the stories surrounding the ascension doing so: the Protean nature of the protagonist, presented in the chapter dealing with the vision received by Apollonius’ mother when she was pregnant (I 4), is revealed, not for the first time, in the penultimate chapter, when Apollonius releases himself from his fetters (VIII 30.3). Philostratus’ treatment of the accounts of the end of Apollonius’ earthly existence can indeed be profitably compared with his presentation of the stories preceding and surrounding Apollonius’ birth.⁴⁶ These suggested that the sage was an incarnation of Proteus (I 4), that he was akin to Apollo,⁴⁷ and, according to his co-citizens, even a son of the local Zeus *Asbamaios* himself.⁴⁸ Both at the beginning and at the end of the account of Apollonius’ life as a mortal, Philostratus is prepared to introduce notions from traditional religion and the language of mythology in order to convey the unique nature of his hero. But it should also be pointed out that both at the beginning and at the end of the *Life*, he seems unwilling fully to commit himself to such conceptions or to impose them on his readers. The story about Proteus is given an allegorical interpretation by the author—apart from the fact that, as we observed, it left ample room for ambiguity. The story about Apollonius being the son of Zeus is seemingly contradicted by the protagonist. As for the assumption into heaven, the reader is tactfully offered the possibility of a spiritualized interpretation of Apollonius’ ascension.

⁴⁶ Cf. Hanus 1998:215: “Ce dernier coup d’éclat est en réalité l’aboutissement logique du premier ensemble consacré à la venue au monde d’un être divin.”

⁴⁷ I 5. The story of the swans surrounding Apollonius’ mother and provoking delivery by their call implies an Apollonian birth; see Callimachus *Del.* 249–254; cf. Billault 2000, 113.

⁴⁸ Reading in I 6 παῖδα <τούτου> τοῦ Διὸς τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον γεγονέναι. See Gerard Boter’s contribution in this volume, pp. 55–56.

Still, one of the signs accompanying Apollonius' birth seems to be directly reflected in the stories about his assumption into heaven: a thunderbolt appeared in the sky, but instead of striking, it disappeared upwards (I 5). The author interprets the sign as a divine indication of Apollonius' "elevation above all worldly things and his nearness to the gods." It does not seem too far-fetched to understand the thunderbolt's disappearance into heaven as a prefiguration of Apollonius' ascension. In spite of his unwillingness to take full responsibility for the conceptions involved and in spite of the ambiguity of his apologetics, Philostratus can be said to have paved the way for the view of Apollonius to be found in fourth-century sources: a being of divine origin who, at the end of his "visit to mankind," returns to his heavenly abode.⁴⁹

The Escort of Heracles

What clearly distinguishes the accounts of Apollonius' assumption into heaven from the stories about Heracles, Empedocles, and Romulus, is that they are situated in temples: the temple of Athena at Lindus, on the island of Rhodes, and the sanctuary of Dictynna on Crete. There is, of course, a famous precedent for disappearance in a temple: the early fifth-century athlete Cleomedes of Astypalaea who, after having caused the death of sixty children, took refuge in the temple of Athena, hid in a chest, and vanished without leaving a trace. The stupefied Astypalaeans consulted Delphi; the god called Cleomedes "last of the heroes" and ordered his co-citizens to worship the athlete as being no longer a mortal.⁵⁰ But for obvious reasons Cleomedes does not seem to be a very attractive model, and we should probably be not too surprised that the Philostratean Apollonius who, after all, made a habit of living in sanctuaries,⁵¹ is also told to have left life from a temple.

⁴⁹ Eunapius VS 454; cf. the well-known Apollonius epigram: IdC 88 = FGH 1064 T 6, now conveniently reprinted as testimonium 41 in volume III of C.P. Jones' *Loeb Life of Apollonius*.

⁵⁰ Plutarch, *Rom.* 28.5–6; Pausanias 6.9.6–8; Oenomaus of Gadara fr. 2 Hammerstaedt = Eusebius *PE* 5.34.

⁵¹ The passages on Apollonius' visits to sanctuaries have been assembled by Bowie 1978:1688n143. A somewhat longer stay seems to be implied in I 8.2 (...ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἔζη); IV 40.4 (ᾧκει μὲν δὴ ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς); V 20.1 (Χειμάσας δ' ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος ἐν τοῖς Ἑλληνικοῖς ἱεροῖς πᾶσιν...); VIII 15.1 (διητῶντο ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τοῦ Διός). In the case last mentioned Apollonius' appeal to the god's hospitality even involves a request for financial assistance from the sacred funds (VIII 17)!

This leaves us, however, with a tantalizing question: why *these* temples of *these* goddesses? Part of the answer is perhaps not too hard to find in the case of Athena. The choice of the goddess may have drawn inspiration from the myth of Heracles, according to which the hero had been escorted to the Olympus by Athena: a scene frequently represented in art from the Archaic and Classical periods, witness for example Pausanias' description of the throne and altar of Apollo at Amyclae.⁵² Thus the choice for a sanctuary of Athena may point in the direction of influence of the apotheosis of Heracles as a model. Obviously, the imitation of Heracles could not be carried too far: having the Tyanean climb a pyre on Mount Oeta would not do. Locating Apollonius' ascension in a well-known sanctuary of Athena such as Lindus had the advantage of suggesting the precedent without overdoing things.⁵³

In addition, Lindus was the scene of an interesting aetiological myth about Heracles that Philostratus knew quite well. In the version as told in pseudo-Apollodorus' *Library* (II 5.11), the hero disembarks in Thermydrae, the harbour of Lindus. When meeting a bullock-team driver, he looses one of the bullocks from the cart, sacrifices it and wolfs it down, while the unfortunate team driver curses the hero from a safe distance. The myth served to explain the Lindian custom of sacrificing a bull to Heracles while cursing him.⁵⁴ A similar myth locates the story in the country of the Dryopians, near Mount Oeta, and gives the name of the owner of the bullocks as Theiodamas.⁵⁵ In the Lindian myth the owner is mostly anonymous. Philostratus' *Imagines* (II 24 = LIMC Herakles 2808), however, contains a description of the Lindian myth, in which Heracles' victim (here a ploughman) is called Theiodamas. In the *Life* (V 23) Apollonius' censure, during a previous visit to Rhodes, of a young glutton who imagines himself the equal of Heracles, may well allude to the same myth. It is also noteworthy that a famous painting of Heracles by Parrhasius, for which the hero himself was told to have posed by appearing to the artist in his dreams, was under the Early Empire on display at Lindus:⁵⁶ a piece of information that may well have appealed to the author of the *Imagines*.

⁵² Pausanias 3.18.11 and 3.19.5 = LIMC Herakles 2863.

⁵³ Note that Strabo XIV 2.11 (655 C) calls the temple at Lindus ἐπιφανές.

⁵⁴ The full evidence for the Lindian version of the myth is collected and discussed by Croon 1953:283–288, esp. 284n2.

⁵⁵ See e.g. "Apollodorus" II 7.7; cf. Croon 1953:288n1.

⁵⁶ Athenaeus XII 543f–544a; Pliny the Elder XXXV 71; cf. Van Straten 1976:15.

Conspicuously absent in the information about the Rhodian mythology and cult of Heracles reviewed so far is a link between the hero and the goddess Athena. That changes, however, when we turn to the entries of the so-called Lindian chronicle detailing dedications presented to the sanctuary.⁵⁷ Of the two wicker shields allegedly dedicated by Heracles, one was captured from Eurypylus, king of the Meropes, the inhabitants of Cos (B23–26 Higbie). According to the entry under discussion, Heracles' dedications were amply attested in literary sources about the history of Rhodes such as local chronicles and encomia (B29–36 Higbie). The inscription does not mention the reason for the dedication of Eurypylus' shield. According to a Coan epos, however, the *Meropis*, Heracles had experienced considerable difficulties in overcoming the Meropes, and only succeeded when Athena had killed the giant Asterus.⁵⁸ As has been pointed out by the most recent editor of the Lindian Chronicle, it is a very attractive hypothesis that the legendary dedication was occasioned by the help received by Heracles from his divine patroness.⁵⁹

The place of Heracles in Rhodian mythology is not confined to a single visit.⁶⁰ Heracles' son Tlepolemus settled on the island and became its king.⁶¹ Moreover, the temple of Athena, according to tradition built by Danaus, was rebuilt in the sixth century by the Lindian tyrant Cleobulus, one of the Seven Sages, who traced his descent back to Heracles.⁶² Of course, Rhodes was not unique in claiming several links with myths surrounding the greatest of the Greek heroes. Still, Lindus was the location of a remarkable cult of Heracles, accounted for in an aetiological myth that constitutes a clear parallel to a myth located in the region of Mount Oeta. In addition, the mythology of the Dodecanese did include

⁵⁷ I have consulted the Lindian Chronicle in the edition, with translation, commentary, and interpretative essays by Higbie 2003.

⁵⁸ Koenen and Merkelbach 1976 is a publication of papyrus Köln Inv. 5604, according to the editors a fragment from Περὶ Θεῶν by Apollodorus of Athens, dealing with epithets of Athena. The author paraphrases and quotes passages from the *Meropis* dealing with Athena's assistance to Heracles against the Meropes, see esp. lines 17–38 and 55–75; on the *Meropis* see the editors' comments on pp. 22–26.

⁵⁹ Higbie 2003:77, at B25–26. Note that another entry in the Chronicle describes a dedication to Athena and Heracles by the Lindians who participated in the foundation of Cyrene: "Pallas and a lion being strangled by Heracles, made from lotus wood" (B109–117 Higbie).

⁶⁰ For a survey of the evidence see Higbie 2003:247f.

⁶¹ See for the evidence (i.a. Diodorus V 59.5–6) Higbie 2003:80, at B37–41.

⁶² Diogenes Laertius I 89; cf. Higbie 2003:103, at C1–5.

a story about Athena saving the hero from dire straits. Heracles' presence in Rhodian mythology and cult must have sufficed to sustain the suggestion of the Heracleian precedent of Apollonius' farewell to life implied in the choice of a temple of Athena. Of course, the fact that the Lindian sanctuary was "outstanding in antiquity and venerability" (A2-3 Higbie) did not detract from its attractiveness.

The Kourotrophos of Zeus

Dictynna is not in the same league as Athena, and although her temple near the Cretan city of Cydonia was not a negligible quantity in the Greek world under the Early Empire, its selection as the scene of Apollonius most elaborate farewell to life poses an enigma of quite intimidating proportions. Perhaps that is why there is a tendency among those who have written on the *Life*, starting with the author of the *Reply to Hierocles* (44.3), to keep silent about the identity of the Cretan goddess from whose temple Apollonius allegedly ascended to heaven.⁶³ An exploration of the myth and the cult of Dictynna may help us better to understand a couple of details of the story and even offer part of a solution to the riddle.

Our most important sources for the myth of Dictynna are Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* (189-205 Pfeiffer) and a chapter from Antoninus Liberalis' *Metamorphoses* (40). Callimachus tells the story of a Cretan nymph, Britomartis, a sharp-eyed huntress, favourite of Artemis. Minos desired her and pursued her for nine months. When he had almost caught her, she leapt into the sea from a promontory. She was saved in the nets (δίκτυα) of fishermen, and was henceforth called Dictynna and worshipped as a goddess. Callimachus adds a few details about her cult; he also tells that the Cretans call Artemis after her. According to Antoninus Liberalis, Britomartis was a daughter of Zeus and Carme. Her peregrinations brought her from Phoenicia to Argos and from Argos to Cephallenia, where she received divine honours under the name of *Laphria*. After that she came to Crete, where she was pursued by Minos and found a refuge in the nets of fishermen; henceforth, she

⁶³ In some cases, there is confusion rather than silence. Petzke 1970:198 lists VA VIII 30 as one of the chapters in the *Life* mentioning Artemis; Talbert 1978:1635 has Apollonius enter "the temple of *Athene* [my italics], whereupon a chorus of maidens was heard singing from within: (...)."

was worshipped as Dictynna among the Cretans. After having escaped Minos, she went to Aegina, where she withstood the unwelcome attentions of her ferryman, Andromedes, and disappeared—became ἀφανής; hence, on Aegina she was revered as Aphaia. The version of the myth told by Callimachus is criticized by Diodorus Siculus (V 76.3–4), who refuses to believe the unedifying tale about the pursuit by Minos and who thinks that Britomartis took her second name from the fact that she invented hunting nets. The historiographer adds that some men think her identical with Artemis. Pausanias, in his description of Aegina (II 30.3), holds that Britomartis/Dictynna is the same as Aphaia; the identification that we have also seen in Antoninus Liberalis.

A number of features common to the literary tradition deserve to be emphasized. In the first place, Britomartis and Dictynna are generally held to be one and the same person. Secondly, she is explicitly called a daughter of Zeus by Diodorus, Pausanias, and Antoninus Liberalis. In the third place, according to the literary evidence she is revered as a goddess among the Cretans. In the fourth place, endangered virginity, escape by a leap into the sea, and fishermen's nets as a rescue or a refuge are recurrent themes in the myth of Dictynna. Finally, the goddess is identified with other local divinities—Laphria on Cephallenia, Aphaia on Aegina—and with a Panhellenic goddess, Artemis.

In spite of such identifications, there is a modest amount of evidence showing that Dictynna succeeded in maintaining a separate cultic identity even in some places outside Crete:⁶⁴ a votive inscription from Laconia, dated by the editor to the end of the fourth or beginning of the third century BCE;⁶⁵ a votive inscription from Astypalaea, dated to the Hellenistic period;⁶⁶ two decrees of the citizens of Carian Amyzon, attesting the existence in their city of a priesthood of Zeus Cretagenetas and Dictynna at the end of the third century BCE;⁶⁷ and a sanctuary in Sparta mentioned by Pausanias (III 12.8). Nevertheless, it seems

⁶⁴ On evidence for cults of Dictynna outside Crete see Guarducci 1935:198 and 200–202; Willets 1962:184; Chr. Boulotis, "Diktynna," LIMC III 1:391–394, at 392; Steinhauer 1993:78n6. The epigraphic evidence for a cult of Dictynna in Massilia mentioned by these scholars is not above all suspicion, see SEG XXXV 1065; XXXIX 1082; L 1076.

⁶⁵ Steinhauer 1993:76f. = SEG XLIV 343.

⁶⁶ IG XII 3.189; on the date see most recently Steinhauer 1993:78n6.

⁶⁷ *Amyzon* no. 14, line 3; no. 15, line 3; cf. SEG XXXIII 851. See also SEG XLIII 707, a decree of the citizens of Carian Euromos, where in line 18f. the same priesthood has been plausibly restored.

that outside Crete there was a trend in the direction of identification of Dictynna with Artemis and of the development of her name into an epiclesis of the Olympian huntress.⁶⁸ On Crete itself, however, Artemis and Dictynna maintained separate identities in cultic contexts up to and including the imperial era.⁶⁹ The same is true for Dictynna and Britomartis, who in the literary tradition tend to be identified: while Britomartis was revered in the eastern and central part of the island, evidence for the cult of Dictynna is limited to western Crete, where it relates to cities such as Aptera, Cydonia, and Polyrrhenia in the north, and to Lisos on the southern coast.⁷⁰

When, as in the penultimate chapter of the *Life of Apollonius*, the sanctuary of Dictynna is mentioned, the term may be taken to refer to the temple of the goddess on the peninsula that is nowadays known as Rhodopou and that was called Mount Tityros in Antiquity.⁷¹ The peninsula juts out about 15 kilometres from the northern coast of western Crete. On its eastern side, on a promontory above a bay a few kilometres from its northernmost tip, stood a sanctuary the history of which reached back into the Archaic age. The site was excavated in 1942 by a team of German archaeologists; their findings were the point of departure of the recent attempt to reconstruct the cult in the Dictynnaion by Katja Sporn.⁷²

The oldest finding on the site pointing in the direction of a temple dates from the late seventh or sixth century BCE. In the Late Hellenistic period or in the first century CE, a rebuilding of the complex was started. To that end, the promontory was levelled, but the planned temple was never completed. It was only in the second century CE, probably during

⁶⁸ Identification can already be found in Euripides, *IT* 126f. For 'Dictynna' as an epiclesis of Artemis see e.g. IG II² 4688 (votive inscription for Artemis Dictynna from Athens); Pausanias III 24.9 (a temple of Artemis Dictynna near Laconian Las); IG IX 1.5 (a priestess of Artemis Dictynna in Phocian Anticyra; cf. Pausanias X 36.5); SEG XXVI 1623, line 6f. (dedication of a *temenos* to Apollo *epêkoos* and Artemis Dictynna by Antiochus I of Commagene); Plutarch, *Mor.* 984a; Apuleius, *Met.* XI 5.

⁶⁹ Pace Callimachus, *Dian.* 204f. Pfeiffer: ...καὶ δέ σε κείνης/Κρηταέες καλέουσιν ἐπωνυμίην ἀπὸ νόμφης. See Guarducci 1935:200; Sporn 2001:225; Sporn 2002:325.

⁷⁰ See i.a. I.Cret. II iii 1 (Aptera); Herodotus III 59; Strabo X 4.12 (Cydonia); I.Cret. II xi 1, with LIMC Dictynna 1 (Polyrrhenia); I.Cret. II xvii 1 (Lisos); cf. Guarducci 1935:189f.; Willetts 1962:184; Steinhauer 1993:79n8; Sporn 2002:263f., 277–280, 285f., 311f., 324f. and 384.

⁷¹ Strabo X 4.12.

⁷² Excavation report: Welter/Jantzen 1951; Sporn 2001; full bibliography in Sporn 2002:277n2072.

the reign of Hadrian, that a new temple arose.⁷³ The dating is based on the fact that a Roman road, which started at the sanctuary and which, for the first time in history, opened up the peninsula, was built during Hadrian's reign, witness a milestone found in the village of Rhodopou. It seems a reasonable assumption that the new temple was built in the same period as this road, which was financed from the *pecunia sacra* of the goddess.⁷⁴ During the Antonine era, the imperial authorities also channelled the apparently rather abundant financial means of the sanctuary to public projects on other parts of the island.⁷⁵ This attests to the wealth of the Dictynnaion, which is explicitly mentioned by Philostratus. From an early first-century inscription regarding the receipts and expenditure of the sanctuary, it can be inferred that it was at least partly based on the exploitation of herds of cattle and sheep.⁷⁶

As for the cultic functions of the sanctuary, Sporn has put forward the attractive suggestion that Dictynna was not just a patroness of hunters and fishermen,⁷⁷ but also of marriageable girls: together with Pan she probably presided over *rites de passage*.⁷⁸ Of course, the maiden's choir urging Apollonius to ascend to heaven fits in very well with this reconstruction. In addition, Dictynna may have been a healing goddess, especially assisting women at childbirth.⁷⁹ Sporn conjectures that the

⁷³ On the building history of the site see Welter/Jantzen 1951:116f.; Gondicas 1988: 288–290; Sporn 2001:226–228; Sporn 2002:277f.; Prent 2005:311f.

⁷⁴ I.Cret. II xi 6; cf. Welter/Jantzen 1951:117; Sporn 2001:228.

⁷⁵ I.Cret. IV 333 and 334; cf. Guarducci's commentary on I.Cret. II xi 6; Sporn 2002:279f.

⁷⁶ I.Cret. II xi 3; cf. Sanders 1982:39.

⁷⁷ Sporn 2001:228.

⁷⁸ For Dictynna's cultic association with Pan see Guarducci's introduction to the inscriptions from the Dictynnaion, I.Cret. II:130f.; Sporn 2001:230f. The evidence consists of a representation of Pan on the fragmentary base of a column of the cella of the Hadrianic temple in combination with *Anthologia Graeca* XVI (= *Appendix Planudea*) 258. The hypothesis about *rites de passage* for marriageable girls is based on the analogous case of the association of Pan with Artemis in the cave of Pan at Eleusis in Attica, where there is evidence for marriage rites, see Sporn 2001:232.

⁷⁹ Sporn 2001:233, referring to Apollodorus, FGH 244 F 128 (= *Scholia in Euripidem, Hipp.* 73 [15,3–7 Schwartz]), who mentions that on Crete the wreaths of Artemis are made of mastic and (Cretan) dittany (δικταμ[ν]ον), adding that dittany is used to ease childbirth; see on the medicinal use of Cretan dittany also the evidence collected by M.C.P. Schmidt, "Diktamnon 2," RE V:582f. As the mastic is mentioned by Callimachus in connection with Dictynna's cult (*Dian.* 201), it seems reasonable to assume, as Sporn does, that Apollodorus "der allgegenwärtigen Verwechslung der Diktynna mit Artemis erlegen war."

Dictynnaion was also the scene of an orgiastic cult.⁸⁰ Whatever one may think of this part of her reconstruction, adducing Apollonius' assumption into heaven as an extra argument fails to carry conviction.⁸¹

Distinguishing Dictynna's cultic functions from those of Artemis is not an easy task, to put it mildly, and Sporn's skilful reconstruction has not made it any easier. Similar problems apply to the iconography of the goddess. The identification of a representation is guaranteed only where textual evidence or the location of a find offer confirmation.⁸² The latter is the case with the relief crowning an inscription with the text of a treaty between Phalasarna and Polyrrhenia, dating to the early third century BCE and found on the site of the Dictynnaion.⁸³ Dictynna here symbolizes the city of Polyrrhenia. She is dressed in a short tunic and has a bow and a quiver across her shoulders. The only element that in this relief distinguishes her from Artemis is that she is accompanied by a wild goat—a species that is to this very day emblematic of western Crete—rather than by a stag.⁸⁴ Worth noting are, in addition, the two dogs above the pediment of the relief: they symbolize, of course, Dictynna's function as a goddess of hunting, but they may also indicate that the presence of dogs in her sanctuary was more than just a security device. We shall return to the dogs presently.

Textual evidence for the identification of representations of the goddess is available in the case of a couple of coins, for example a coin of the provincial *koinon* from the reign of Domitian, showing on the reverse a huntress accompanied by a dog; the legend reads ΔΙΚΤΥΝΝΑ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ.⁸⁵ On a provincial coin from the reign of Trajan the goddess is represented with a small child on her left arm, flanked by two shield-bearing warriors; the legend reads ΔΙΚΤΥΝΝΑ—ΚΡΗΤ(ΩΝ).⁸⁶ This is Crete, and it is generally accepted that the warriors are Courètes and

⁸⁰ Sporn 2001:231f. observes that representations of grapes can be seen on architectural fragments at the site of the Dictynnaion, and she identifies the Bacchic nymph crowned with vines and/or grapes on coins from Cydonia (see e.g. Svoronos 1890:100 no. 3 and 104 no. 36) as Dictynna.

⁸¹ Contra Sporn 2001:232: "Einen orgiastischen Kult am Diktynnaion legt übrigens auch die Nachricht nahe, daß Apollonius von Tyana bei einem Besuch im Diktynnaion im 1. Jh. v. Chr. (*sic*) entrückt sei."

⁸² Boulotis, "Diktynna," LIMC III 1:393: "Ikonographisch ist D. mit Artemis identisch (...); selbst die Kretenser besaßen anscheinend keine eigene D.ikonographie."

⁸³ LIMC Diktynna 1.

⁸⁴ Boulotis, "Diktynna," LIMC III 1:393.

⁸⁵ LIMC Diktynna 3 = Svoronos 1890:343 no. 55.

⁸⁶ LIMC Diktynna 4 = Svoronos 1890:123–124 no. 4.

that, consequently, the child must be Zeus. In other words, this coin attests a myth for which there is only iconographical evidence from Western Crete: Dictynna's role as *kourotrophos* of Zeus. Although the coin is unique in claiming this position for the goddess, the juxtaposition of Dictynna and Crete-born Zeus is also epigraphically attested, both on Crete itself and in Caria.⁸⁷

For the larger part of its existence, the Dictynnaion came under the city of Cydonia.⁸⁸ In the coinage of Cydonia, a curious reverse type is frequently represented, from the second century BCE up to and including the reign of Trajan. It displays a child suckled by a dog; the legend reads KYΔΩΝ or KYΔΩNIATAN/KYΔΩNIATΩN.⁸⁹ The dog is a specimen of the breed called *kynosouris*, which is also on view on the relief and on the Domitianic coin, both mentioned above.⁹⁰ There are basically two diverging interpretations of this reverse type. The first is that the child is Kydon, the eponymous founder of Kydonia. The second interpretation takes the infant to be Zeus, and the scene as a pointer to a local myth from western Crete in which Zeus was brought up by a bitch.⁹¹ There is another interesting piece of evidence, pointing in the same direction: a tradition according to which a nymph called *Kynosoura* ('Dog's Tail') was one of the nurses of Zeus and was afterwards placed among the stars as the constellation *Arktos Mikra*, 'Lesser Bear'.⁹² Although the sources for this story put *Kynosoura* among the Idaean

⁸⁷ See Guarducci 1935:193f.; Willets 1962:191f.; Sporn 2001:229. Epigraphical evidence: I.Cret. II xvii 1 (Lisos); *Amyzon* no. 14, line 3; no. 15, line 3; cf. n. 67, above. An interesting parallel can be found in Carian Lagina, where on the frieze of her temple Hecate is represented as *kourotrophos* of Zeus, see Simon 1993:279f.; I owe this reference to my student Monica Werk. This is a myth for which there is no textual evidence either: in Hesiod *Th.* 450–452, Hecate is made *kourotrophos* by Zeus, which is not easily reconcilable with a role as foster mother of Zeus. Note that Hecate is one of the goddesses with whom Dictynna was sometimes identified, see *Scholia in Euripidem, Hipp.* 146 (24,11–16 Schwartz).

⁸⁸ For discussion of the intricate political history of the sanctuary see Sporn 2002: 278–280.

⁸⁹ Svoronos 1890:104 no. 36–42; 107 no. 61; 111–113 no. 92 and 94–107; 114 no. 119; 115f. no. 131–136; 118 no. 148–149; 119 no. 153; cf. Stefanakis 2000:79 and 81 with n. 15; Sporn 2001:229.

⁹⁰ Stefanakis 2000:81f.

⁹¹ The second interpretation was originally proposed by Svoronos and has been recently championed by Sporn 2001:229f. Stefanakis 2000:83f. emphasises that it is impossible to prove one of the proposed identifications. Although he prefers the first, he does admit that Svoronos' interpretation "may point towards the reconstruction of a lost myth of Zeus Cretagenes."

⁹² Aglaosthenes FGH 499 F 1 = Eratosthenes, *Cat.* 2; see also Aratus 30–37; Hyginus *Astr.* II 2; cf. Sporn 2001:230 with n. 23; Stefanakis 2000:84.

nymphs, Hesychius connects her name to Cydonia.⁹³ Sporn has taken this line of reasoning one step further and has argued that Dictynna herself may originally have been a theriomorphic nymph.⁹⁴ Whatever one may think of this hypothesis, there seems to be sufficient evidence to suggest that the dogs kept in the sanctuary on Mount Tityros had a significance which exceeded their practical value as watch dogs. It is, moreover, tempting to surmise that the comparison of these dogs with bears, ascribed by Philostratus to the Cretans,⁹⁵ is a reflection—admittedly a pale one—of a story about a canine *kourotrophos* of Zeus who was raised to the stars to become the Lesser Bear.

Our reconnaissance of Dictynna's myth and cult has revealed that Philostratus' account of Apollonius' ascension from the Dictynnaion contains a fair amount of local colour. The story refers to the considerable wealth of the sanctuary for which there is ample evidence from the early-imperial period. The presence of dogs is apparently a credible detail, and the comparison of these animals with bears may be more than coincidental. In addition, the fact that Apollonius is given a send-off by a maiden's choir fits in very well with a plausible reconstruction of one of the sanctuary's cultic functions.

However, we have not yet found an answer to the question *why* the most elaborate version of Apollonius' demise is situated in the Dictynnaion. As I have pointed out in the introduction, I don't have an answer to that question that I myself find fully satisfactory. Still, there are a couple of elements in Dictynna's myth which make the choice of Philostratus' Apollonius less curious than, at first sight, it seems. In the first place, a link with Zeus is a recurrent element in Dictynna's myth and cult. According to part of the literary evidence, she is a daughter of Zeus; numismatic evidence makes her a *kourotrophos* of Zeus. Both on Crete and in Caria, cults of Dictynna and Crete-born Zeus are attested. Apollonius himself was, according to a Tyanean story reported by Philostratus (I 6), considered a son of Zeus *Asbamaios*, whose cult was central to the identity of his native city.⁹⁶ Thus, a link with Zeus joins Apollonius to Dictynna, and one might argue that the sanctuary

⁹³ Hesychius s.v. Κυνόσουρα. Cf. Sporn 2001:230 with n. 24.

⁹⁴ Sporn 2001:230.

⁹⁵ VIII 30.2: ... καὶ ἀξιοῦσιν αὐτοὺς οἱ Κρήτες μήτε τῶν ἄρκτων μήτε τῶν ὄδε ἀγρίων λείπεσθαι.

⁹⁶ On the cult of Zeus *Asbamaios* see Berges and Nollé 2000:317–319.

of a maiden goddess who could combine the roles of daughter and foster mother of Zeus, was not the most unlikely place for Apollonius to return to his divine father.⁹⁷ In the second place, Dictynna is a goddess who has started her career on a lower ontological echelon and who has experienced an apotheosis. This is emphasized by Pausanias (VIII 2.4), who puts Britomartis/Dictynna in the same category as, for example, Heracles. Thus, the goddess is a predecessor of Apollonius, and to a certain extent this makes her temple an appropriate location for the admittance of a man among the immortals. It should be admitted that Philostratus does not explicitly refer to the myth of Britomartis/Dictynna. However, readers asking themselves why her temple was chosen as the location for Apollonius' ascension may have remembered her connection with Zeus and her apotheosis.⁹⁸

Finally, the story of the posthumous epiphany of Apollonius may contain a significant allusion to the pursuit of Britomartis/Dictynna by Minos. According to Callimachus (*Dian.* 193–194), Minos chased the nymph for nine months until at last, when he had almost caught her, she escaped by leaping into the sea. In the final chapter of the *Life* (VIII 31.1), the student of philosophy visiting Tyana pressurizes Apollonius

⁹⁷ For a former visit of Apollonius to Crete, "which we consider the nurse of Zeus" (tr. Jones), and to the sacred sites on Mount Ida in particular see VA IV 34.

⁹⁸ As we have seen, in Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* (195–200) the transition of Britomartis/Dictynna to divine status coincides with a leap into the sea. On the concept of divinization by a leap into the sea see A. Hermann, "Ertrinken," RAC 6:370–409, at 393f. Carcopino 1926 has tried to demonstrate that the representation of Sappho's leap from the Leucadian rock, in the apse of the subterranean basilica near the Porta Maggiore in Rome, is informed by Pythagorean concepts; see for a lengthy restatement of this thesis Carcopino 1956:9–81. However, the main literary evidence adduced by Carcopino (1926:382f.; 1956:14–23) for the Pythagorean character of the hypogaeum and for a Pythagorean appropriation of Sappho's 'Meeressprung' (Pliny the Elder XXII 20) does not suffice to carry the weight of his conclusions, as has been demonstrated by Hubaux 1928; cf. Hubaux 1930:187–194; André 1958; Bastet 1958:73 with n. 3. According to Carcopino, it was Pliny's contention that magicians and Pythagoreans speculated about Sappho's love for Phaon (resulting in her leap into the sea). However, the passage under discussion may just as well, if not better, be understood as implying nothing more than that these gentlemen were fascinated by the aphrodisiacal properties of the root of the white variant of the *erynge*. The attempt by Sauron (1994:604–630) to resuscitate Carcopino's hypothesis fails to answer Hubaux' well-founded objections to Carcopino's interpretation of the information supplied by Pliny; see especially Sauron 1994:606 and 609, where XXII 20 should be read for XXXII 20. To the best of my knowledge, there is no evidence for the assumption that apotheosis by a leap into the sea was a notion especially dear to Pythagoreans, and I don't think it advisable to look for an explanation for the choice of the Dictynnaion in this direction.

with his prayers for nine months, and only then he is favoured with a personal communication discouraging idle curiosity. Forced to acknowledge that he has chased a being that is beyond his grasp, the young man finds himself in the same position as Minos. And so, perhaps, does the inquisitive reader of Philostratus' Cretan tale. The final epiphany of Apollonius once again reveals his Protean nature: even in manifesting himself he defies capture.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ I am much indebted to Gerard Boter for his incisive comments on the penultimate version of this paper. Of course, he is not responsible for the views expressed in it or for any remaining errors. I also would like to express my gratitude to the colleagues of the Universiteit Gent who organized the conference at Brussels, for a memorable occasion, as pleasurable as it was instructive.

SOME LETTERS OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA¹

CHRISTOPHER JONES

The Letters of Apollonius are a variegated collection. They survive partly from quotations in Philostratus' *Life* and in Stobaeus, but mainly from medieval manuscripts that in turn divide into two separate families, and sometimes give discrepant versions of the same text. Additionally, questions of all kinds surround the authenticity of the letters, if "authentic" is understood to denote one originally written or dictated by Apollonius, even though later abbreviated or excerpted, as opposed to one wrongly ascribed to him (whether deliberately or by innocent error). There seems no reason to question Philostratus' statement that the historical Apollonius wrote letters to "kings [which as usually in this period can mean Roman emperors as well as foreign kings], sophists, philosophers, Eleans, Delphians, Indians, and Egyptians, on the subject of gods, about customs, morals and laws, setting upright whatever had been overturned among such people" (VA I 2.3). It is unlikely that he made collections of his own letters, as for example the Younger Pliny did of his, but there is no doubt that others did so either before or after his death. According to Philostratus, the emperor Hadrian owned "certain of Apollonius' letters, but not all" (VIII 20). The biographer cites or alludes to many letters in the *Life*, some of which recur in the medieval copies. His younger contemporary and relative, Philostratus of Lemnos, also refers to the letters of "the Tyanean" as if they were generally accessible,² and later in the third century Porphyry (Stob. *Anth.* I 3.56 = Jones 2006a:95 no. 13) quotes one allegedly written by Apollonius to the Indian king Iarchas, unless this is a recollection of one cited by Philostratus in the *Life* (III 51).

There will probably never be agreement on criteria for judging which of the letters are authentic, in the sense given above. The present paper will examine some for which archaeology, and specifically epigraphy, suggest that the writer had considerable knowledge of certain local

¹ An earlier version of this paper has appeared as Jones 2006b. I use my editions of the *Life* (Jones, 2005) and of the *Letters* (Jones 2006a).

² *Dialexis* I, Kayser 1871:257–258; for the authorship, Solmsen 1941:134.

cults, and is more likely to be Apollonius than an impersonator. The discussion is mainly confined to letters directed to cities or sanctuaries of old Greece and the province of Asia, and ends with one not preserved in manuscript form, but in an inscription of Ephesus copied in the fifteenth century.

Olympia

Letter 26 of the collection is addressed to certain functionaries at Olympia.

τοῖς ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ θεηκόλοις. Θεοὶ θυσιῶν οὐ δέονται. τί οὖν ἄν τις πράττων χαρίζοιτο αὐτοῖς; φρόνησιν, ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, κτώμενος ἀνθρώπων τε τοὺς ἀξίους εἰς δύναμιν εὖ ποιῶν. ταῦτα φίλα θεοῖς, ἐκεῖνα δὲ ἀθέων.
 θεηκόλοις Kayser: θεηκόροις

To the *theēkoloi* at Olympia. The gods do not need sacrifices, so what might one do to please them? Acquire wisdom, it seems to me, and do all the good in one's power to those humans who deserve it. That is what pleases the gods, but your actions are those of atheists.

The manuscripts' θεηκόροις is a *hapax*, and Kayser proposed θεηκόλοις, which Robert Penella in his excellent edition of the *Letters* approves, but does not adopt.³ Kayser must have got the word from his reading of Pausanias, or from a Lexicon such as the revised Stephanus, since until the late nineteenth century the only attestation was in the *Periegete* (V 15.10), where also it had been corrupted: μέλει δὲ τὰ ἐς θυσίας θεηκόλῳ τε, ὃς ἐπὶ μηνὶ ἐκάστῳ τὴν τιμὴν ἔχει, καὶ μάντεσι καὶ σπονδοφόροις (θεηκολότῳ ὅσα the manuscripts).⁴ Pausanias' description makes clear that these monthly sacrifices were by no means all those that took place in the sanctuary, but only those on a specific set of seventy altars around which the officiants processed, perhaps all in a single day. In addition, they were not blood-offerings, but consisted of frankincense together with barley kneaded with honey.⁵

Beginning in 1875, the German excavations of Olympia produced a large number of inscriptions listing the cult-personnel of the sanctuary and stretching in time from 36 BCE to 265 CE. These showed that Pausanias' use of the singular θεηκόλῳ was misleading, since in fact three

³ Penella 1979a:104.

⁴ The correction (minus τε) is due to I. (J.) Kuhn (Kuhn 1696:416).

⁵ See especially Weniger 1920.

theêkoloi served at a time; in addition, the usual spelling of the word is θεοκόλος, and θεηκόλος is attested only once at Olympia, in a list of uncertain date, though a statue-base of the second or third century has the participle θεηκολήσαντα (*IvO* 123, 468). Otherwise this form seems to be found only in writers and inscriptions of the imperial period, for example at the Olympieion of Athens completed by Hadrian, who clearly modeled the organization of the new temple after Olympia.⁶

It hardly seems possible that so specialized a detail could have been known to anyone not familiar with the cult-practices of Olympia. That does not exclude a forger, but it is more economical to identify the writer as Apollonius himself. Philostratus mentions the Eleans among his addressees, and describes a number of his visits to Olympia or conversations about it in the *Life*. Moreover, a passage from his work *On sacrifices* matches closely the doctrine espoused in this letter (*Praeparatio Evangelica* IV 13.1 = Jones 2006a:114 no. 22). “One might best therefore, so I think, pay the fitting attention to the divine, and in consequence more than any human by comparison find him favorable and kindly...if he was not in any way to sacrifice to God...nor light fire, nor address any perceptible thing to him at all, for he needs nothing even from those who are superior to us...For these reasons one should in no way sacrifice to the great God who is above all.” Certainly the Philostratean Apollonius, while condemning blood-sacrifice, does not object to sacrifice of material such as frankincense, and hence might not have condemned the bloodless sacrifice of the *theêkoloi* at Olympia. But to judge by the passage in Eusebius, the ideal preached by the historical Apollonius was more rigorous still. Either then Philostratus has made him more sympathetic than he actually was to the sacrifice of substances such as incense, or else he held the officials at Olympia to a higher standard than ordinary mortals, including on occasion himself.

The following letter (27) is addressed to “the priests” at Delphi, and this too condemns blood sacrifice, blaming it for the misfortunes that strike cities. Delphi was a city as well as a sanctuary, and the cult was

⁶ In general, Robert 1966:745–746 = OMS VI 563–564; see now also Antonetti 1995: 355–356. Lucian, *Alexander* 41; *IG* II/III² 3313 (dedication to Hadrian by οἱ πρῶτοι θεηκόλοι); *IG* II/III² 3606.17 (choirboys serving Olympian Zeus); *IG* II/III² 5085 (seat of *theêkoloi* in theater of Dionysus); *Corinth* 8.3.207, *theêkolos* of Kronos = Saturn; Oliver 1970:116–117 no. 31 (= *IG* IX 1.218), no. 32 (Amphicleia, Phocis); *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* LI 641.13 (Naryka, Eastern Locris).

in the hands of two priests; one of these, possibly in the lifetime of Apollonius, was Plutarch.

Ephesus

In Philostratus' *Life*, perhaps no city is more closely connected with Apollonius than Ephesus, and four letters in the collection are directed to groups within the city. The first (32) is to the "scribes" (*grammateis*), and says that colored stones and elaborate buildings are of no use to a city if it lacks "wisdom and law" (*nous kai nomos*). Ephesus had three simultaneously functioning *grammateis*, the best known being "the people's scribe" (*grammateus tou dêmou*). In a famous incident of the *Acts of the Apostles*, this official calms the mob by reminding them that their meeting does not constitute a "statutory assembly," and that "we risk being charged for today's discord" (*Acts* 19.35–41). There were also scribes of the *boulê* and *gerontes*, and these, or possibly just the "scribes of the council and the people," are presumably the addressees of this letter. All these details, however, might have been known to a forger no less than to Apollonius.

The subject of lawlessness recurs in a sequence of three further letters (65–67) addressed to "the Ephesians in the (sanctuary of) Artemis" (Ἐφεσίων τοῖς ἐν Ἀρτέμιδος),⁷ an expression presumably designating the cult-personnel of this famous holy place. All three letters concern lawlessness on the part of persons lodging in the sanctuary, and the reference can hardly be other than to the celebrated "asylum" or inviolable area. This receives its fullest description from Strabo, who had visited the city. "The sanctuary remains inviolable (*asylon*) now as previously, but it has often happened that the boundaries of the asylum have been changed. Alexander extended them for a stade, but Mithridates [VI of Pontus] shot an arrow from a corner of the roof and was thought slightly to have overshot a stade, while Antony doubled this and included a part of the city in the inviolable space. But since this proved to be harmful and to put the city at the mercy of criminals, Augustus Caesar annulled it" (Strabo XIV 1.23, C. 641). The city's asylum was confirmed in Tiberius' general review of such claims (Tacitus, *Annals* III 61), and appears not to have undergone any later change.

⁷ Ἀρτέμιδι the manuscripts: Ἀρτέμιδος Olearius.

Of the three letters in sequence (65–67), the first is the most informative.

Ἐφεσίων τοῖς ἐν Ἀρτέμιδος. ἔθος ὑμῖν ἅπαν ἀγιστείας, ἔθος δὲ βασιλικῆς τιμῆς. ἀλλ' ὑμεῖς ἐστιάτορες μὲν καὶ δαιτυμόνες οὐ μεμποί, μεμποί δὲ <οἱ> σύνοικοι τῇ θεῷ νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμέρας, ἢ οὐκ ἂν ὁ κλέπτης τε καὶ ληστής καὶ ἀνδραποδιστής καὶ πᾶς εἴ τις ἄδικος ἢ ἱερόσυλος ἦν ὀρμώμενος αὐτόθεν· τὸ γὰρ τῶν ἀποστερούντων τεῖχος ἐστίν.

<οἱ> add. Wilamowitz τεῖχος Olearius: τύχης

To the Ephesians in the Sanctuary of Artemis: You observe every detail of religion, every detail of honor to the emperor. But while *you* are beyond reproach as “Feast Givers” and “Dinner Guests,” the reproach lies with those who lodge with the Goddess night and day, since otherwise the thief, the bandit, the kidnapper, everyone of a sinful and sacrilegious nature, would not be issuing from there. Why, the sanctuary is a robbers’ castle.

The reference to “Feast-givers” and “Dinner-guests” finds an echo, like Apollonius’ letter to the *theêkoloi* of Olympia, in Pausanias (VIII 13.1). The Periegete is commenting on the sanctuary of Artemis Hymnia near Arcadian Orchomenos. This was administered by a priest and a priestess, who were obliged to live their whole lives in a state of complete purity (*hagisteuein*); they did not have baths or any of the other amenities of ordinary people, or enter the houses of a “private [that is, lay] male” (*andros idiôtu*). “Such things I know are observed for one year, and no more, by those who become feast-givers (ἱστιάτορας) for Artemis of Ephesus, and are called ‘*Essênes*’ (Ἑσσηνες) by their fellow-citizens.”

In 1924 G.P. Oikonomos published a classic study of these *Essênes* (who have nothing to do with the Jewish sect of Essenes, who are Ἑσσαῖοι or Ἑσσηνοί).⁸ Duly citing this letter of Apollonius (and expressing no doubt about its authenticity), Oikonomos inferred that in the imperial period their functions had shrunk to that of giving feasts to large crowds in the sanctuary twice a year. These occasions were apparently so rowdy that “night-guards” (*nyktophylakes*), who could simultaneously serve as *Essênes*, were needed to protect the sanctuary. When Oikonomos wrote, there was as yet no epigraphical evidence for the role of the *Essênes* as “feast-givers,” since a crucial text, discovered in 1899, was published by Josef Keil only in 1946. In this the honorand “served as *neôpoi*os, fulfilled the two *essêniai*, selected all (the members

⁸ Oikonomos 1921–1922, especially 340–341.

of) the boards by lot, and with (his) co-magistrates entertained the *Hellênodikai*.”⁹ This confirms Oikonomos’ intuition, and also illustrates the connection between Ephesians attached to the goddess Artemis and “Feast-givers” and “Dinner-guests.” This very precise detail surely comes from Apollonius himself, and not a forger.

Sardis

More letters in the collection are addressed to Sardis than to any other city, and all are on the subject of discord or *stasis*. By contrast the *Life* only mentions Sardis in passing, and represents Apollonius talking about this subject only in Smyrna and Syrian Antioch. Sardis is known to have had a severe outbreak of discord under Domitian, but there is no way of telling whether this is the occasion for any of these missives.¹⁰

One of them, 56, refers to Earth (*Gê*) as unjustly yielding its crops (*karpōs*) to the Sardians: “You have become enemies without crossing the Halys or receiving any person from abroad, and yet Earth bears crops for you. Earth is unjust.” “Receiving anyone from abroad” alludes to Herodotus’ story of the hospitality shown by Croesus to the Phrygian Adrastus (I 35). Letter 75 again alludes to Herodotus and to Croesus, but this time also to Demeter: “The son of Alyattes had no power or means to save his city, though he was king and he was Croesus. But you, what sort of lion are you trusting in so as to enter a war to the death, boys, youths, adults, old men, even young women and wives? One would think that your city was the realm of the Furies, not of Demeter. The goddess loves mankind, so what is this anger of yours?” Here again the words “What sort of lion...” must refer to Herodotus’ story of Meles, an early king of Lydia, who was told that the acropolis of the city would be impregnable if he carried a lion-cub around the walls; he failed to do so in one part, and in Croesus’ reign the Persians breached them at this very point (I 84.3).

A third letter, 75a, is of particular interest. It was restored to the collection only by Penella in 1975.¹¹

⁹ Keil 1946 (*I.Ephesus* 958); cf. also Keil 1951:283–284 no. 30 (*I.Ephesus* 4330).

¹⁰ Letters to Sardis: 38–41, 56, 75, 75a, 76. Sardis in the *Life*: VI 37. Discord in Smyrna and Syrian Antioch: IV 8–9, VI 38. Discord in reign of Domitian: Herrmann 1996:496 with n.3.

¹¹ Penella 1975; see also Penella 1979a:5n19, referring to an earlier publication by A. Sabatucci.

τοῖς ἐν Σάρδεσιν. αἰτίαν ἔχετε τὴν πάτριον θεὰν σέβειν τε καὶ τιμᾶν. ἡ δὲ μήτηρ ὀνομάζεται παρ' οἷς μὲν θεῶν, παρ' οἷς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, παρὰ πᾶσι δὲ καὶ καρπῶν· ἡ δὲ μία κοινὴ τε καὶ πάντων. εἴτα πῶς μόνων ὑμῶν ἐχθρὰ τὰ γένη νόμῳ καὶ φύσει καὶ ἔθει, τῶν Δημητρος ιδίων;
 ἡ δὲ μήτηρ Jones (ἡ δὲ μήτηρ Penella): ἡ Δημήτηρ

To those in Sardis. You have a reputation for worshiping and honoring your ancestral goddess. Now she is called by some people “Mother of the Gods,” by others “Mother of Humanity,” and by all “Mother of Crops,” but she is one, universal and belonging to all. So how is it that you alone have families that are hostile to law, nature and custom, you who are Demeter’s own?

Despite the fact that Sardis has undergone extensive excavation, until very recently there was nothing to suggest that Demeter enjoyed special honor there; no inscription mentioned her, though some coins showed her image together with Kore. In 1984, however, an altar was found close to Sardis. Publishing it in 1998, the late Peter Herrmann dated it from the script about the middle of the first century CE. The chief honorand is a certain Claudia, who served as *kaueis* (a Lydian word designating a kind of priestess) and as priestess (*hiereia*) of Demeter Karpophoros.¹² The references in letter 56 to “crops,” and in 75 and 75a to Demeter as an “ancestral goddess” of Sardis, now become clearer: the city had a cult of Demeter Karpophoros, attested precisely in the lifetime of Apollonius.

An Inscription from Ephesus

With this last letter in mind, it is time to look once more at Ephesus. As already observed, four letters in the collection are addressed to the city, and all, especially number 65, have a good chance of coming from the real Apollonius. Though he scolds the citizens for allowing criminals to reside in the sanctuary of Artemis, he does so without criticizing their own piety: in fact, they observe “every detail of religion [and] every detail of honor to the emperor,” ἔθος ὑμῖν ἅπαν ἀγιστείας, ἔθος δὲ βασιλικῆς τιμῆς.

This phrase, and the whole subject of the letter, find a curious echo in an Ephesian inscription copied by Cyriac of Ancona, but now lost. It contains the first part of a petition addressed to the proconsul Mestrius

¹² Herrmann 1996 (SEG LVIII 1472).

Florus, the well-known patron of Plutarch who governed Asia as pro-consul ca. 88/89. The subject is the “mysteries” of Demeter Karpophoros and Thesmophoros.¹³

Λουκίῳ Μεστρίῳ Φλώρῳ ἀνθυπάτῳ παρὰ Λουκίου Πομπηίου Ἀπολλωνίου Ἐφεσίου. μυστήρια καὶ θυσίαι, κύριε, καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐπιτελοῦνται ἐν Ἐφέσῳ Δῆμητρι Καρποφόρῳ καὶ Θεσμοφόρῳ καὶ θεοῖς Σεβαστοῖς ὑπὸ μυστῶν μετὰ πολλῆς ἀγνείας καὶ νομίμων ἔθῶν σὺν ταῖς ἱερίαις, ἀπὸ πλείστων ἐτῶν συντετηρημένα ἀπὸ βασιλέων καὶ Σεβαστῶν καὶ τῶν κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἀνθυπάτων, καθὼς αἱ παρακείμεναι ἐπιστολαὶ αὐτῶν περιέχουσιν. ὅθεν, ἐπειγόντων καὶ ἐπὶ σοῦ τῶν μυστηρίων, ἀναγκαιῶς, κύριε, ἐντυγχάνουσί σοι δι' ἐμοῦ οἱ ὀφείλοντες τὰ μυστήρια ἐπιτελεῖν, ἵνα ἐπιγνούς αὐτῶν τὰ δίκαια...

To Lucius Mestrius Florus proconsul, from Lucius Pompeius Apollonius of Ephesus. Mysteries and sacrifices, my lord, are performed every year in Ephesus to Demeter Bringer of Crops and Bringer of Laws and to the deified emperors by celebrants with great holiness and law-abiding customs together with the priestesses, (and have been) preserved by kings and Augusti and the yearly proconsuls, as the attached letters demonstrate. Wherefore, as the mysteries are approaching in your term also, those who are due to perform the mysteries necessarily appeal to you through me so that, recognizing their rights...

Cyriac copied the document in the “citadel” (*arx*) of Ephesus, presumably the hill of Ayasoluk to which many *spolia* have been brought from the lower city. He gives no description of the stone that might indicate whether it bore any other text, and to judge from the annotation at the end of his copy, καὶ τὰ λοιπά, there must have been more that he did not transcribe, whether from fatigue, boredom, or illegibility of the stone. Like most of Cyriac's copies, this comes down by manuscript tradition, in this case a single exemplar first observed in the nineteenth century. Cyriac was a careful copyist, though details may have been altered in transmission.¹⁴

The actual document belongs to the category of petitions, or *enteuxeis*, that are especially well known from papyri. In epigraphy such petitions are much less common, and only the replies of an emperor or an official are usually preserved. Smyrna has two documents not unlike the present one. The first is a petition to Antoninus Pius submitted by

¹³ Riemann 1877:289 no. 72; *Syll.*³ 820; *I.Ephesus* 213. On Mestrius: *PIR*² M 531; for his proconsulate, Eck 1982:315. For Demeter Karpophoros at Ephesus, Knibbe 1970:285. Other inscriptions found on Ayasoluk: Keil 1951.

¹⁴ Cf. Robert 1963:87–90, on another inscription from this same manuscript.

a citizen, probably an ambassador in Rome, asking to copy decisions previously made by Hadrian in connection with some priesthood or religious celebration; the other is a very mutilated series of documents concerned with the Artists of Dionysus.¹⁵ Another comparable dossier, on a recently published stele from the region of Sardis, contains several documents concerning a village fair (*panêgyris*). A priest of the local Zeus, one Metras, had approached Antoninus Pius when he was still proconsul of Asia, asking permission to set up the fair. Pius assented, but for some reason Sardis did not ask for a renewal of this right from Pius when he had become emperor, so that a certain Asinius Rufus of Sardis, patron or owner of the village, wrote to the city fathers urging them to give special consideration to this fair, since the present emperor had shown an interest in it before his accession. Despite Metras' own role in the business, he does not include the text of his own petition, but only that of Pius' original decision and of Asinius Rufus' letter.¹⁶

The present petition differs from these in its emphasis on the petitioner's own person. If any significance attaches to the way Cyriac copied it, it occupied a prominent, perhaps sole, position on the stone. The text is unusual also in not mentioning any position that the writer had held in the city, but only that the Ephesians have "necessarily" turned to him to make their appeal.

Apollonius of Tyana had close connections with Ephesus, especially towards the end of his life, and it appears frequently both in Philostratus' biography and in the *Letters*. When Book IV of the *Life* opens, he enters Ephesus, and while there receives embassies from the cities round about, which proclaim him their "guest (*xenos*)" and ask his advice about setting up altars and sacred statues (IV 1.2). He also visits "all the shrines" of the city during his stay (IV 4). The famous anecdote about his telepathic observation of Domitian's murder takes place "in the groves of Ephesus" (VIII 25.1–2). Philostratus also knows of a tradition that he died there (VIII 30.1), and Lactantius says that he received cult in the form of Heracles Alexikakos (*Divine Institutes* V 3.14 = Jones 2006a:110 no. 20). It might also be relevant that he allegedly wrote his will in Ionic (VII 35). Thus it is worth exploring

¹⁵ *I.Smyrna* 597, 598.

¹⁶ Malay 1994:152–156 no. 523, on which I follow Nollé and Eck 1996. Compare the petition concerning a fair on the territory of Magnesia on the Maeander, Nollé 1982 (SEG XXXII 1149).

the possibility that the Lucius Pompeius Apollonius of the epigraphical letter is none other than Apollonius of Tyana.

It well fits Philostratus' account of Apollonius' concern with cult, and specifically with ensuring proper and traditional practices in temples of the gods. The *Life* contains several incidents of his correcting errors, quarreling with cult personnel, or expelling impiety; an early example is his sojourn in the Asclepieion of Aegae.¹⁷ The same theme occurs in the *Letters*, but one to Sardis that has already been mentioned is especially relevant. Here Apollonius reproves the citizens for indulging in civic strife when their "ancestral goddess" is Demeter, who is "called by some people 'Mother of the Gods,' by others 'Mother of Humanity,' and by all 'Mother of Crops'" (*Mêtêr Karpôn*). As we saw, no cult of Demeter in Sardis was known until 1998, when Peter Herrmann published the statue base honoring a priestess of Demeter Karpophoros. One side of this has a relief showing a *cista mystica* and what may be two torches, and Herrmann inferred that Sardis must have had mysteries of this goddess. As a parallel he referred to the present inscription of Ephesus: "ähnliches dürfen wir vielleicht für Sardeis voraussetzen."

Certainly, there are obstacles to the identification of this Apollonius with the philosopher. First, nomenclature. The epigraphical copy may not reproduce exactly the text of the heading, but if it does so, his expected style would be "Apollonius son of Apollonius," since that according to Philostratus was what he used in his writings (*Vita Apollonii* I 6). He might also be expected to be "Tyanean," not "Ephesian." Above all, the *tria nomina* of a Roman citizen seem hardly compatible with observations that he makes both in the *Life* and in the *Letters* about Greeks who take Roman names.

To take the last point first, it is of course perfectly normal for sophists, philosophers, and the other educated men to receive the Roman citizenship, and at the same time to use a Hellenic style in certain contexts, particularly literary ones.¹⁸ The hundreds of pages of Plutarch's surviving works give no sign that he was a Roman citizen, and his strictures on Greeks who desert their cities to pursue honors at Rome might suggest that he remained defiantly Greek (*De tranquillitate animi* 470 C). Yet an inscription copied at Delphi in the eighteenth century shows that a Mestrius Plutarchus acting on behalf of the Delphians (ἀπὸ Δελφῶν)

¹⁷ *Vita Apollonii* I 10–11; cf. IV 29 (Elis), 31.2 (Sparta), VIII 19.2 (Lebadeia).

¹⁸ E.g., Jones 1978:230–231.

was responsible for setting up a statue to Hadrian. Only in 1889 was this official recognized as Plutarch, who must have received the Roman citizenship by the good offices of Mestrius Florus, the consular and friend of Vespasian. This highly cultured Roman, whom Plutarch characterizes as a lover of antiquity, is also the proconsul who received the appeal from “Lucius Pompeius Apollonius” on behalf of the ancient mysteries of Demeter.¹⁹

Could Apollonius actually have become a Roman citizen? The *Life* frequently shows him on friendly terms with Roman emperors such as Vespasian, Titus and Nerva, and with officials like the praetorian prefect Aelianus, and some of the letters are addressed to provincial administrators such as quaestors and procurators (*Lrs.* 30, 31, 54). There is no reason why he should not have received the citizenship by the agency of some Lucius Pompeius. One such is the Lucius Pompeius Vopiscus from Vienna in Narbonensis to whom Vitellius granted the ordinary consulate of 69 together with Verginius Rufus. His nomenclature entered into that of C. Catellius Celer, consul suffect in 77. Neither of these two is known to have been in the province of Asia, though the consul of 77 went on to become *curator viarum aedium sacrarum locorumque publicorum*, and an *adiutor* of his is honored no less than three times in Ephesus.²⁰

In a letter to his brother Hestiaeus, Apollonius rebukes him for calling himself Lucretius or Lupercus “once” when their father styled himself “three times over” son of Menodotus (*Lr.* 72); that is, in the customary Greek way of abbreviating homonymity, their father Apollonius was the son, grandson and great-grandson of men called Menodotus.²¹ Robert Penella is perhaps right to take this letter literally: Hestiaeus wished to be called “once” by a Roman name such as Lucretius, and thus could not call himself son and grandson of a Lucretius. A phenomenon very frequent in the imperial period, though it begins well before, is that of double names, in Greek often joined by ὁ καί or ἡ καί. In 1977 Louis Robert cited this practice as illustrating “un phénomène important, celui du changement de nom au cours de la vie.” In a classic study of such double names, Maximilian Lambertz drew attention to a practice

¹⁹ *Syll.*³ 829 A: Lefèvre 2002:357–358 no. 150. Mestrius Florus as *philarchaios*: *Quaestiones convivales* VII 4, 1, cf. Jones, 2003:161–162.

²⁰ *PIR*² P 661, 662. *Adiutor* at Ephesus: *IEphesus* 736, 2061, 3046.

²¹ On these two passages, Bresson 1996:234–235; cf. Bowersock 2004:57–58. Homonymity: e.g. Robert 1963:98.

in Syria and Asia Minor. One of the two names is Latin, he observed, and the reason for bestowing this name may be supposed to be the bearer's desire to assimilate himself to a Roman environment. Often of course, especially if a Greek name is joined to a Latin one, or two Latin ones are joined to each other by *ὁ καὶ*, the reason for taking the second name is to be sought merely in the fact that, precisely in the Hellenistic-Roman world, taking double names had become the fashion, which people adopted without any particular reason.²² Lambertz cited names such as "Achilles also called Maximus from Nicomedia in Bithynia," "Antipatros also called Gaius" from Amorion in Phrygia. Rather than changing his name, therefore, Hestiaeus may simply have taken a second, Latin, name by which he preferred to be called, thus bringing down his brother's rebuke. In other words, the letter need not concern the Roman citizenship at all, but rather a contemporary fashion of nomenclature. Similarly, when Apollonius rebukes members of the Ionian League for allowing Roman names into their documents (VA IV 5, *Lr.* 71), his objection need not be that they are Roman citizens, or even that they have Roman names, but that they should use such names in their official documents, thus abandoning their traditional style of nomenclature. A recently published inscription shows the Ionian League honoring a woman with the thoroughly Roman names of Octavia Capitolina.²³

If the text shows a man actually from Tyana calling himself Ephesian, that is to be expected from someone addressing a governor on the affairs of Ephesus. Multiple citizenships are frequent in this era, and traveling athletes, pantomimes and the like accumulate large numbers of them.²⁴ In one of the *Letters*, Apollonius represents Euphrates as reproving him with the words, "If he was of any account (εἴ τι ᾗν: perhaps, 'If he had had the chance'), he would have taken money, gifts, citizenships, as I have," to which Apollonius answers, "If he was of any account, he would not have taken them" (*Lr.* 8.2). But this need only mean that he has not accumulated citizenships in the manner of a mountebank philosopher such as Euphrates. Even a devoted Chaeronean such as Plutarch was

²² Robert 1979:36 = OMS VI 690; Lambertz 1914:159.

²³ Thus Penella 1979a:127: "Apollonius is perhaps only incensed by the flaunting of Roman names, or by the opportunism and neglect of Hellenic culture that might have been a concomitant of using Roman names *in some cases*." Octavia Capitolina: SEG L 1146.

²⁴ Thus the pantomime C. Iulius Apolaustus: *F.Delphes* I 551: Robert 1930:106–113 = OMS I 654–661.

also a citizen of Athens, and epigraphy has further revealed him as a citizen of both Delphi and Rome.

A final objection that might be raised against Apollonian authorship is the style of the letter, which is correct but flat. In particular, the use of ἀπό with the genitive rather than ὑπό to express agency struck Dittenberger as a “prava inferioris aetatis consuetudo.” Nonetheless, this usage appears as early as Polybius,²⁵ and the style of the other letters is not especially elevated. One of them, addressed to the sophist Scopelian (*Lr.* 19), is precisely on the various kinds of letter, of which the last two are the “epistolary” (*epistolikos*) and the “official” (*hypomnêmatikos*), and Apollonius, if he is the author, thinks best the style that expresses the writer’s character most directly. Philostratus observes that his Greek was “neither dithyrambic . . . nor recherché (*kateglôttismenê*) and hyper-Attic,” though he also describes his work *On Sacrifices* as “solemnly” (*semnôs*) written.²⁶ But it would not be unnatural for the historical Apollonius to write a petition to a Roman governor in an “official” style, or to adjust his language and nomenclature to the purpose in hand.

In conclusion, it may be proposed that Apollonius of Tyana is the author of this petition to Mestrius Florus. There is no telling when or why it was inscribed. Apollonius is not likely to have done so, but if he had resided in Ephesus, and successfully petitioned a proconsul who was also a patron of learning, the Ephesians might well have chosen to record his plea in stone.

²⁵ LSJ s.v. ἀπό III 4; Arndt, Gingrich, Danker 2000:107, s.v. ἀπό 5 β.

²⁶ *Vita Apollonii* I 17, III 41.2.

THE EMESAN CONNECTION: PHILOSTRATUS AND HELIODORUS

J.R. MORGAN

At the end of the *Aethiopica* the novelist Heliodorus identifies himself thus:

Τοιόνδε πέρας ἔσχε τὸ σύνταγμα τῶν περὶ Θεαγένην καὶ Χαρίκλειαν Αἰθιοπικῶν· ὃ συνέταξεν ἀνὴρ Φοῖνιξ Ἑμισιηνός, τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος, Θεοδοσίου παῖς Ἡλιόδωρος.

So concludes the *Aithiopika*, the story of Theagenes and Charicleia, the work of a Phoenician from the city of Emesa, one of the descendants of the Sun by race, Theodosius' son, Heliodorus (Heliodorus X 41.4).¹

Near the beginning of his work Philostratus connects the composition of the *Life of Apollonius* to the empress Julia Domna:

καὶ προσήκων τις τῷ Δάμιδι τὰς δέλτους τῶν ὑπομνημάτων τούτων οὐπω γινωσκομένας ἐς γνῶσιν ἤγαγεν Ἰουλίᾳ τῇ βασιλίδι. μετέχοντι δέ μοι τοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν κύκλου—καὶ γὰρ τοὺς ῥητορικοὺς πάντας λόγους ἐπὶ νηὶ καὶ ἡσπάζετο—μεταγράψαι τε προσέταξε τὰς διατριβὰς ταύτας καὶ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας αὐτῶν ἐπιμεληθῆναι, τῷ γὰρ Νινίῳ σαφῶς μὲν, οὐ μὴν δεξιῶς γε ἀπηγγέλλετο.

The notebooks containing the memoirs of Damis were unknown until a member of his family brought them to the attention of the empress Julia. Since I was a member of her circle—for she admired and encouraged all rhetorical discourse—she set me to transcribe these works of Damis and to take care over their style, since the style of the man from Ninus was clear but rather unskilful (I 3.1).²

Julia Domna was a native of Emesa, and her family closely connected with the cult of the Sun God there. The city and its cult are thus common ground to both these texts. This paper will argue that, although neither of them explicitly mentions the Emesan Sun-cult, it is nevertheless an essential background element to both, and that they employ similar systems of displaced discourse to similar ends to deal with it.

¹ Heliodorus is quoted from the translation by J.R. Morgan in Reardon 1989.

² Philostratus is cited from the edition and translation of C.P. Jones.

Emesa, a city on the river Orontes in Syria, first enters the historical record when its Arab dynasts joined the Roman cause in the 1st century BCE.³ It is best known, however, as the centre of the cult of a deity whose name, 'LH'GBL, appears in classical texts as *Elagabalos* or *Elaïogabalos*. There is some debate about the original nature of this god, whose name seems to connect him with mountains rather than the Sun, and whose cult centred on a black stone, apparently a meteorite; at some point, however, whether by domestic development or under pressure from the Hellenisation of its ruling classes, the god of Emesa had been thoroughly solarised, and it is only as a sun-god that he appears on coins and in our literary sources.⁴ Later his name was explicitly connected to the Sun by a false etymology, and he appears in fourth-century Latin texts as Heliogabalus.

Julia Domna's father Julius Bassianus was priest of the Emesan Sun God. She became the wife of the emperor Septimius Severus, and the mother of the future emperor Caracalla. After her son's assassination in 217, she began to intrigue against the new emperor, Macrinus, and may have returned to Emesa, before taking her own life. Her sister, Julia Maesa, certainly returned to Emesa, and continued the intrigue, using as figurehead her grandson, Varius Avitus Bassianus, who was by now the chief priest at Emesa. He was hailed as emperor in 218 under the name of M. Aurelius Antoninus, and set about introducing the cult of Elagabalus to Rome, where the eastern rituals caused outrage; he is commonly called by the name of his god.⁵ He was assassinated in 222, and the throne then passed to his cousin Alexander Severus. Julia Domna herself was a thoroughly Hellenised lady: Philostratus writes of her circle of writers and intellectuals, of which he was himself a member. Although the scale and importance of this circle have often been over-rated,⁶ its reality is less important than its symbolic function as a marker of the empress's *paideia*, exploited both by herself as an element

³ On the early phase of Emesa's contacts with the Roman world, see Sullivan 1977.

⁴ On this see Seyrig 1971, and Millar 1993:300–309, who stresses how little is known of the social and cultural context into which 'the few dramatic moments' of Emesa's history may be fitted. The literary evidence relating to the Emesan cult is collected and discussed by Halsberghe 1972, with some additions in Halsberghe 1984. Millar 1993:301n3 reports the communication to him of an alternative interpretation of 'LH'GBL, but gives no details of its meaning.

⁵ Turcan 1985 reconstructs his biography, with a good summary of his religious background.

⁶ For correctives, see Bowersock 1969:101–109, and Flinterman 1995:22–26.

of her aspirational public image, and by Philostratus to characterise her as the motivator of his own text.

Apart from the biographical connection between Julia Domna and the Emesan cult, both of our texts attach some significant importance to the Sun and its worship. In Philostratus, Apollonius' regular worship of the Sun is at the centre of his piety,⁷ and his most important journeys take him to the parts of the earth closest to the Sun, India and Ethiopia, both characterised by their solar devotions; at other points in the narrative too there are emphatic references to the Sun and its agency.⁸ Heliodorus' novel begins with a sunrise, and its final sequences are set in the solar theocratic state of Ethiopia, climaxing with the elevation of its hero and heroine to solar and lunar priesthood. The final word of the text is the author's name, 'Ηλιόδωρος, *Gift of the Sun*.

I am going to begin by exploring how an 'Emesan' reading of Heliodorus' novel might work. The idea as such is not new, though earlier scholars have been too crude in seeing the novel as straightforward propaganda for the cult.⁹ The usual practice is for an author to identify himself at the beginning of a text,¹⁰ but Heliodorus deliberately withholds his identity until the narrative is completed. This strategy, which is absolutely characteristic of his narrative technique of postponing the release of information, allows the revelation of his Emesan origins and solar connections to contribute meaning to the story retrospectively: the last sentence in a sense provides an unexpected key to unlock a hitherto unsuspected layer of meaning. In terming himself a descendant

⁷ I 31.2, II 38 (τὴν εἰθισμένην εὐχὴν), VI 4.3, VI 10.1 (ὥσπερ εἰώθει), VI 32.1, VII 6; VII 10.1 (ὅποσα εἰώθει, in a passage involving opposition to tyranny), VII 31.1, VIII 13.2.

⁸ I 31.2 in Babylon Apollonius finds the King about to sacrifice a Nisaeian horse to the Sun; II 24.1 a description of the Temple of the Sun at Taxila; II 28.2 an Indian taboo against eating tiger because the animal raises its paws to the Sun as soon as it is born; III 14.1 a magic well activated by the noon-day Sun; III 14.3 a mystic fire lit from the rays of the Sun; III 15.1–2 the Indians levitate to be closer to the Sun, which dispenses the seasons and fertility; III 28.2 the inferior Indian king thinks he is identical to the Sun; III 48.1 gold-guarding griffins are sacred to the Sun; V 25.2 fire as an image of solar wisdom; VI 11.20 only the Indians worship the Sun properly; VIII 23 the Sun predicts the assassination of Domitian.

⁹ The fullest statement of such a case is Altheim 1942 (1948); Merkelbach 1969:234–298 propounds a detailed allegorical reading of the *Aethiopica* as a mystery-text relating to the cult of the Sun.

¹⁰ The historiographical prologues of Hecataeus, Herodotus and Thucydides are good examples of the normal practice, which is followed by Chariton (I 1.1), the only other novelist who names himself in his text.

of the Sun, Heliodorus uses a formula, τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος, that I have not been able to parallel in any document relating to the Emesan cult, literary or epigraphic. The uniqueness of the phrase suggests that it may have been coined to serve a literary function within the economy of the novel, by forging an equivalence between the author and the people of Ethiopia, who also claim descent from the Sun as their *gene-arches*.¹¹ Thus, by extension, the fictional Ethiopia—an idealised pious solar kingdom—is revealed as an analogue for the author's own home city—the centre of an important solar cult.

This idea has interesting and significant ramifications. The first concerns the novel's structure. In a standard-issue Greek novel, the protagonists start out from a major Greek centre, and bring their adventures to a conclusion by returning home. Chariton's protagonists start in Syracuse, travel to Babylon, and return together to Syracuse to live out their happy ending. In Xenophon of Ephesus' novel the hero and heroine set out from Ephesus, hurtle around the Mediterranean in a more or less clockwise direction, reach the nadir of their fortunes in the Italian west, but eventually are reunited and return to Ephesus to resume the happiness that their adventures interrupted. The fictional structure is a geographical journey from centre to periphery and back, so potentially constructing an ideologically Hellenocentric world.¹² Heliodorus turns this convention inside out: his heroine, Charicleia, begins and ends her story in Ethiopia, and near the end of the novel Greece is referred to as at the ends of the earth.¹³ The moral structure too is subversive: the action is distributed over three distinct geographical zones, which form an obvious spiritual and moral hierarchy. At the bottom is Athens, which features only in a secondary narrative, characterised by a story and characters out of New Comedy, as a site of immorality and triviality. As the main plot works its way southwards there is a clear moral ascent from Greece, through Egypt, until it reaches Meroitic Ethiopia, where a pious and just king is advised by a cabinet of Gymnosophists or Naked Sages who embody divinely inspired wisdom. Important secondary

¹¹ IV 8.2–3; X 11.3.

¹² I emphasise the word *potentially* in this sentence. In fact these novels seem not to grasp all the ideological opportunities that the architecture of their plot offers them. Morgan 2007 argues that the Hellenocentricity of the basic romance plot only becomes operatively meaningful in later and more sophisticated examples of the genre. Nevertheless, the signification of Heliodorus' subversion of the generic norm does not require that norm to have been meaningful to begin with.

¹³ X 16.6, πέρατα γῆς ἔσχατα.

characters, such as the carnal and materialistic Athenian Cnemon, or the duplicitous and ambiguous but charismatically spiritual Egyptian priest Calasiris, never make it to the place where the morally superior hero and heroine will end their days.¹⁴ The world, in other words, is re-centred, cartographically and morally, on Ethiopia: if I am right in seeing the fictional Ethiopia as an analogue to Emesa, this looks like an Emesan contestation of the normal assumptions of Hellenism, and one with some seriousness to it.

Despite its position at the top of the work's moral league-table, however, Heliodorus' Ethiopia is not yet perfect; in fact, the last book of the novel constitutes an account of its final step to the ideal. As soon as they reach Meroe, Theagenes and Charicleia are threatened with human sacrifice, in her case to be performed by her own father, the Ethiopian king Hydaspes. The Gymnosophists disapprove of this rite, and the resolution of the plot coincides with and provides an aetiology for its permanent abolition. Throughout Greek literature human sacrifice is a marker of barbarism, and with its abolition Heliodorus' Ethiopia attains perfect civilisation. The acme of civilisation, however, is conceived in very Hellenic terms. The Ethiopian court already speaks Greek, partly as a narrative convenience of course but partly ideologically.¹⁵ Hydaspes embodies Greek notions of the good king, and is surrounded with a very Greek dialectic about the distinction between true king and tyrant, dramatised around his conflict with the neighbouring Persian satrap.¹⁶ Before being reprieved from sacrifice, Theagenes must defeat an Ethiopian wrestling champion: this combat is characterised as the triumph of Greek skill and intelligence over barbarian brute force, but the Ethiopian populace promptly welcomes Theagenes as its vindicator.¹⁷ At the climax of the novel, just as Ethiopia becomes fully Hellenised, the Greek hero and the Greek-raised, white-skinned heroine become honorary Ethiopians: their investiture as Priest of the Sun and Priestess

¹⁴ These sentences cover ground well trodden in scholarship on Heliodorus. For the zoning of Heliodorus' world see Szepessy 1957, and, with a more modern emphasis, Selden 1998, Whitmarsh 1999b; on the Athenian episode Morgan 1989a; on 'serious' meanings Dowden 1996.

¹⁵ II 24.3: a Greek slave-girl is being brought to Ethiopia to be the queen's "confidante and companion in things Greek" (συμπαιστρίαν καὶ συνόμιλον τὰ Ἑλλήνων ἔσομένην); IX 25.3: Greek is cultivated (σπουδάζεται) by Ethiopian kings and the Gymnosophists.

¹⁶ See especially IX 6.2–3, 21.2–4, 26–27.

¹⁷ X 31–32.

of the Moon is the final fulfilment of an enigmatic reference in an oracle that has underpinned pretty well the entire action of the novel to “a crown of white on brows becoming black.”¹⁸ It is easy enough to see in all this a familiar strategy of exploitation of the idea of barbarian wisdom: in a circular movement Hellenism is paradoxically validated through congruence with ‘primitive’ cultures close to the divine, while those ‘primitive’ cultures are simultaneously validated by their paradoxical voicing of Hellenic norms.¹⁹

To pull all this together, it seems that Heliodorus is playing a subtle double game. As a profoundly Hellenised non-Greek, he is on the one hand using his Ethiopian tale to stake a coded claim for the importance of his native city and its religion in opposition to an exclusively conceived and Hellenocentric Hellenism; on the other hand and simultaneously, he is negotiating their accommodation to the norms of a more widely defined Hellenic culture. This double agenda reflects that of the Emesan cult itself. For example, coins from the reign of Elagabalus commemorate athletic contests held at Emesa under the title of ἡλιὰ πῦθία.²⁰ This is both an obvious move to assimilate the cult to that of Delphic Apollo, and at the same time to relocate and annex the centrality of Hellenism. Significantly, in an exactly similar move, not only do the Delphic Pythian Games play an important role in the novel of Heliodorus of Emesa, but Delphi and Meroe (as analogue to Emesa) are made equivalent to one another by their position as symmetrical sites of religious ceremony at which the initiation and consummation of the protagonists’ love are consecrated. Indeed the Meroitic Sun God is explicitly identified with Delphic Apollo at the very climax of the novel.²¹

The *Aethiopica* cannot and should not be reduced to a tract of simple religious propaganda. It is not a text with an exclusively Emesan meaning, but one of its many levels of meaning is, I am arguing, specifically Emesan. There are, however, huge methodological problems in

¹⁸ X 41.2: λευκὸν ἐπὶ κροτάφων στέμμα μελαινομένων. On the interpretation of this see Morgan 1989b:318.

¹⁹ An example of this which was clearly in Heliodorus’ mind is Herodotus’ account of the meeting between the Ethiopian king and ambassadors of the Persian king Cambyses, in which the ‘primitive’ king deconstructs Persian culture in a way that underwrites Greek concepts (Herodotus III 21–22).

²⁰ Robert 1970; Halsberghe 1972:65.

²¹ X 36.3: τὸν πάτριον ὑμῶν θεὸν Ἀπόλλωνα, τὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα καὶ Ἥλιον (“Apollo, who is one and the same as the Sun, the god of your fathers”; these words are put in the mouth of the Delphic Priest of Apollo himself).

reconstructing the ideology of the Emesan cult. Most of our information comes from hostile sources on the reign of Elagabalus (notably Herodian and Cassius Dio), who were little interested in explaining or even understanding the beliefs of the individual they were presenting so negatively. We should even hesitate before assuming that there ever was a coherently formulated Emesan theology as such.²² Nevertheless, we can perhaps glimpse something of the agenda of the cult by examining the behaviour of its adherents. Within the imperial family there appear to be two opposing broad tendencies: one centripetal, one centrifugal. The first is exemplified by the emperor Elagabalus, who attempted the straightforward transplantation of his god, symbolised by the physical relocation of the black stone itself from Emesa to Rome, and the subordination of all established religions to his own. For him the deity remained Emesan *Elâh-Gabal*, and his ecstatic rituals could be read within a Greco-Roman semiotic framework only as orgiastic sensuality and barbarous excess. The failure to make concessions to western sensibilities caused outrage, culminating in assassination. The second tendency was more concerned to negotiate a position within, rather than in open opposition to, Hellenic culture. This may be symbolised by Julia Domna's pretensions to *paideia*. In general, the oriental salvation religions sought a basis within Greco-Roman thought-systems by universalising their local cult and allowing the original deity to become just one aspect or manifestation of a supreme power. This is certainly what happened later to the Emesan cult under the emperor Aurelian, whose final success over Zenobia in the battle of Emesa in 272 was ascribed to a vision of the local god, and led to the establishment across the empire of a de-orientalised and abstract solar religion, that did not deny but was not confined by its Emesan roots.

It is within this stream of thought that Heliodorus is to be located, as are, I shall argue, also Julia Domna and the *Life of Apollonius*. The *Aethiopica* constructs a representation of an ideal solar cult from which objectionable elements of the cult of Elagabalus are purged or even directly confronted and contradicted. The militant chastity of the protagonists stands in stark contrast to the alleged orgies of the emperor.

²² Halsberghe 1972:79–84 notes the methodological difficulties, but then proceeds to use terms like “the ecclesiastical college of Emesa” (79) with no warrant from the sources. Merkelbach 1969, interpreting Heliodorus’ novel as a mystic text, uses it to reconstruct elements of the dogmas it purportedly encodes: the circularity of the argument is obvious.

The issue of human sacrifice is particularly striking. Accusations of performing human sacrifice are recurrent in the literary sources for the reign of Elagabalus.²³ This is of course a familiar motif in polemic, levelled against many 'marginal' groups, including Christians, that marks its recipient as 'other', but the truth of the allegations is immaterial. What matters is that Heliodorus goes out of his way to purge his representation of a sun-cult of an element that had figured largely in anti-Emesa polemic.

It is not difficult to find details, motifs and themes that are shared by the *Aethiopica* and Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*, and which betoken some sort of intertextual relationship between the two works, an awareness of one writer on the part of the other. Some examples follow.

- a) Both writers mention the red gemstone called *pantarbe*, which has mystic powers. The powers attributed to it differ, however. In Philostratus the *pantarbe* draws other gemstones to it when it is lowered into a river or the sea; in Heliodorus it has the effect of proofing its bearer against the effects of fire, a property put to good use when Charicleia is to be burned at the stake.²⁴
- b) Both (and no other author, as far as I can discover) describe a black man's blush, with similar phrasing. Compare Philostratus: καίτοι μέλανα ὄντα κατάδηλον εἶναι, ὅτι ἐρυθριῶν ("could be clearly seen blushing, black though he was") with Heliodorus: οὐδὲ ἐν μελαίνῃ τῇ χροῖᾳ διέλαθε φοινιχθεῖς, οἶονεῖ πυρὸς αἰθάλην τοῦ ἐρυθθήματος ἐπιδραμόντος ("he could not conceal the blush that suffused his countenance, like a flame licking over soot").²⁵
- c) Philostratus writes of the griffins that dig up gold in India, and which are sacred to the Sun, and later sees the ants of Ethiopia as a counterpart to them. Heliodorus mentions griffins among the list of creatures to be sacrificed in celebration for the Ethiopian king's victorious homecoming, and later an embassy from the Troglodytes presents him with both 'ant-gold' and a pair of griffins with gold harnesses (χρυσόν τε τὸν μυρμηκίαν καὶ γρυπῶν ξυνορίδα). Here both authors demonstrate a similar confusion between and conflation of Herodotus' accounts of the gold-digging ants of India and

²³ Cassius Dio LXXIX 11; SHA *Heliogabalus* 8.1; Halsberghe 1972:83; Turcan 1985:128–129.

²⁴ Philostratus III 46 (paralleled by Ctesias FGH 688 F 45), Heliodorus VIII 11.

²⁵ Philostratus VI 12.1, Heliodorus X 24.2.

the gold-guarding griffins of the Hyperboreans (the latter going back to Aristaeas of Proconnesus).²⁶

- d) As Apollonius proceeds to Memnon, he is guided by a youth called Timasion, who had been the object of his stepmother's desire, and whose experiences are conveyed in a series of reported narratives. Heliodorus includes a subordinate narrative by the victim of a similar infatuation, the Athenian Cnemon. Heliodorus' version is developed at much greater length, but in both cases the stepmother intrigues by libelling the stepson to his father, and in both cases there is an explicit comparison to the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus.²⁷
- e) Both Philostratus' Apollonius and Heliodorus' important Egyptian priest Calasiris are fond of ingenious exegesis of Homer, though the details are different. However, both allude to the portent of the snake and sparrows at Aulis.²⁸ Both writers employ the same Homeric tag, ὀλλύντων καὶ ὀλλυμένων.²⁹
- f) Both writers discuss the Nile flood in similar terms. Philostratus intrudes into the narrative of the crossing of the Indus to do this, whereas Heliodorus puts the scientific explanation, again at rather greater length, into the mouth of Calasiris, as part of his characterisation as a wise man.³⁰
- g) In both works we find similar descriptions of the use of elephants in warfare, Philostratus in India, Heliodorus in Ethiopia, with shared details about the archers in the towers on the elephants' backs.³¹
- h) Apollonius delivers an enigmatic prophecy about the completion of Nero's Isthmian canal, and Philostratus explains that its non-completion was possibly due to a warning from some Egyptians that the tide would rush through from the Corinthian Gulf and overwhelm Aegina. In Heliodorus the Egyptian Calasiris is given a longer disquisition on the tides of the Corinthian Gulf, and comments on the divine providence that placed the Isthmus to stop precisely the occurrence of which Nero's Egyptians warned.³²

²⁶ Philostratus III 48.1, VI 1.2; Heliodorus X 4.1, X 26.2.

²⁷ Philostratus VI 3.1–5; Heliodorus I 9.1–18.1, with a second instalment at II 8.4–10.4.

²⁸ From *Iliad* II 301–20; see Philostratus I 22.2 and Heliodorus II 22.4, supplemented with details from Moschus' *Megara*.

²⁹ Philostratus II 22.5; Heliodorus I 22.5 (from *Iliad* IV 451, VIII 65).

³⁰ Philostratus II 18.2; Heliodorus II 28.

³¹ Philostratus II 12; Heliodorus IX 18.

³² Philostratus IV 24.3; Heliodorus V 17.2–3.

- i) Apollonius explains that dreams which are seen in the morning are more truthful. Heliodorus carefully times a particularly significant dream at just before cock-crow, in order to stress its truthfulness, enigmatic in its interpretation as it may be.³³
- j) In Philostratus there is a description of the palace at Babylon, the bedrooms of which are decorated with mythical scenes, including the story of Andromeda. In Heliodorus, the bedchamber of the Ethiopian king and queen are decorated with pictures of Andromeda; this is functional as it is the sight of the white-skinned Andromeda that causes the queen to conceive a white-skinned child.³⁴
- k) Both texts include condemnation of magic and necromancy, Heliodorus again at greater length and in the voice of Calasiris.³⁵
- l) We have already noted a couple of similarities between Philostratus' Apollonius and Heliodorus' Egyptian priest Calasiris. Large swathes of their characterisation run in parallel. Both are vegetarian and abstain totally from alcohol, and disapprove of animal sacrifice. Both refer to the Spartan law-giver Lycurgus, and both are compared to Proteus.³⁶

This list could easily be extended, and, while some of the individual similarities could be accounted for as co-incidence or commonplace, others are unusual and precise enough, and their cumulative bulk great enough to be regarded as significant.

A particularly important point of contact is that both of these works feature Naked Sages or Gymnosophists in Ethiopia.³⁷ The true

³³ Philostratus II 37.1; Heliodorus I 18.3.

³⁴ Philostratus I 25.2; Heliodorus IV 8.3–5.

³⁵ Philostratus V 12.1; Heliodorus III 16.3–4, exemplified in narrative in the necromantic episode of VI 12–15; renewed condemnation from Calasiris at VI 14.7.

³⁶ Lycurgus at Philostratus VIII 7.21, Heliodorus II 27.1; Proteus at Philostratus I 4; Heliodorus II 24.4.

³⁷ Robiano 1992 attacks the conventional position, namely that Philostratus' innovation in transferring the Gymnosophists to Ethiopia is the direct source of Heliodorus' representation. Many of his points are well taken, and he is right to draw attention to the significant differences between the two depictions of Ethiopian wise men. I think he is mistaken, however, to argue that there is no evidence that the later of these two writers was acquainted with the work of the earlier (see above), and, although his conclusions are different from mine, many of his arguments could be used to support the position adopted in this paper: differences could indicate polemical and deliberate distancing as well as simple lack of contact. The fact that their nakedness is meaningful in Philostratus (VI 11.13, quoted below) but not in Heliodorus suggests, if anything, the dependence of the latter.

Gymnosophists were Indian, and feature in a number of anecdotal accounts of encounters with Alexander the Great, typifying the relationship of philosopher and tyrant;³⁸ they were later identified with the Brahmins. Although there was a long-standing tradition in classical literature of Ethiopian piety and wisdom, Philostratus and Heliodorus are the only Greek authors we know of to have a community of Naked Sages in Ethiopia.³⁹ Regardless of their provenance, Heliodorus' Gymnosophists are an important and functional element in his characterisation of Ethiopia as an idealised solar state: they act as advisers to a humane and Greek-speaking king, and embody the wisdom and piety of the kingdom. Their leader, Sisimithres (whose name syncretistically combines those of Isis and Mithras), was responsible for saving the life of the heroine when she was exposed after birth, because it would have been contrary to the sole precept of his college not to assist any soul once it had taken human form.⁴⁰ The Gymnosophists live in a temple, consult the gods before taking a decision, and are able to predict the future.⁴¹ They threaten to withdraw from a ceremony of sacrifice, as does Philostratus' Apollonius,⁴² and at the climax of the novel Sisimithres acts as the author's mouthpiece in making the final renunciation of human sacrifice and offering an authoritative retrospective interpretation of the action as a demonstration of the divine economy.⁴³

Philostratus also constructs an idealised solar state, in fact two: India and Ethiopia, each with its own set of wise men, respectively Brahmins and Naked Ones (Γυμνοί; he does not use the word *gymnosophistes*, since, as we shall see, he wants to emphasise that the Ethiopians are less wise than the Indians). In two important passages, he locates them at opposite ends of the earth, India in the East, Ethiopia in the West, reflecting the Homeric division of Ethiopia which is found redundantly in Heliodorus:

³⁸ Merkelbach 1977:156–161 traces this tradition, and provides a composite text.

³⁹ A few later Latin writers, such as Sidonius (*Epist.* VIII 3.4) and Jerome (*Epist.* 53.1, 107.8, *Ezech.* IV 13.7) refer to Ethiopian gymnosophists without comment and differentiate them from the Indian “Bragmanes”. Sidonius translated the VA into Latin (*Epist.* VIII 3.1), and so these references probably emanate from Philostratus (though it is remarkable that the Latin authors refer to *gymnosophistae*, a word pointedly avoided by Philostratus).

⁴⁰ Heliodorus II 31.1.

⁴¹ Heliodorus X 4.2–3.

⁴² Heliodorus X 9.6, Philostratus I 31.2.

⁴³ Heliodorus X 39.

καὶ ἄλλως τὸν θεὸν οἶδα κέρατα τῆς γῆς ξυμπάσης Αἰθιοπίας τε καὶ Ἰνδοῦς ἀποφαίνοντα μελαίνοντά τε τοὺς μὲν ἀρχομένου ἡλίου, τοὺς δὲ λήγοντος, ὃ πῶς ἂν ξυνέβαινε περὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὸν χειμῶνα ἐθέροντο;

I know that god has made Ethiopia and India the limits of the entire earth, and causes those in the farthest east and the farthest west to be black: and how could that happen to those peoples unless they were sunburned even in winter? (VA II 18.2).

Αἰθιοπία δὲ τῆς μὲν ὑπὸ ἡλίῳ πάσης ἐπέχει τὸ ἐσπέριον κέρας, ὥσπερ Ἰνδοὶ τὸ πρὸς ἕω, κατὰ Μερὸν δ' Αἰγύπτῳ ξυνάπτουσα καὶ τι τῆς ἀμαρτύρου Λιβύης ἐπελθοῦσα τελευτᾷ ἐς θάλατταν, ἣν Ὡκεανὸν οἱ ποιηταὶ καλοῦσι, τὸ περὶ γῆν ἅπαν ὧδε ἐπονομάζοντες. ποταμὸν δὲ Νεῖλον Αἰγύπτῳ δίδωσιν, ὃς ἐκ Καταδούπων ἀρχόμενος, ἣν ἐπικλύζει πᾶσαν Αἰγύπτον ἀπ' Αἰθιοπῶν ἄγει. μέγεθος μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἀξία παραβεβλήσθαι πρὸς Ἰνδοῦς ἥδε ἡ χώρα, ὅτι μὴδ' ἄλλη μηδεμία, ὅποσαι κατ' ἀνθρώπους ὀνομασται ἤπειροι, εἰ δὲ καὶ πᾶσαν Αἰγύπτον Αἰθιοπία ξυμβάλοισιν, τοῦτ' ἐγώ μεθα καὶ τὸν ποταμὸν πράττειν, οὐπω ξύμμετροι πρὸς τὴν Ἰνδῶν ἄμφω, τοσαύτη ξυντεθείσα, ποταμοὶ δὲ ἀμφοῖν ὅμοιοι λογισαμένῳ τὰ Ἰνδοῦ τε καὶ Νείλου· ἐπιρραίνουσιν τε γὰρ τὰς ἡπείρους ἐν ὥρᾳ ἔτους, ὁπότε ἡ γῆ ἐρᾷ τούτου, ποταμῶν τε παρέχονται μόνοι τὸν κροκόδειλον καὶ τὸν ἵππον, λόγοι τε ὀργίων ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἴσοι, πολλὰ γὰρ τῶν Ἰνδῶν καὶ Νείλου ἐπιθειάζεται.

Ethiopia occupies the western extension of the whole world beneath the sun, as India does the eastern. It adjoins Egypt at Meroe, includes a part of unexplored Africa, and ends at the sea that poets call the Ocean, that being their name for the whole element surrounding the earth. Ethiopia supplies Egypt with the river Nile, which beginning at the Falls brings from Ethiopia all the soil with which it floods Egypt. In extent this region cannot be compared with India, as indeed none of the other continents that are famous among men can. Even if we were to join all of Egypt to Ethiopia, as we must consider the river does, the two of them are still not comparable to India in extent when set against so large a country. But the rivers of the two continents are alike when one considers the natures of the Indus and the Nile. They irrigate their continents in the summer season, when the soil desires it, and they are the only rivers to produce the crocodile and the hippopotamus. Both rivers are equally famous for their sacred rites, since many of the Indians' sacred beliefs also apply to the Nile (VA VI 1.1).⁴⁴

Although the two countries are explicitly counterparts to one another in a symmetrical geography and in some respects interchangeable, Philostratus represents India as the land of true solar wisdom, and

⁴⁴ The Homeric division of Ethiopia is from *Odyssey* I 22–24. Heliodorus alludes to this at IX 6.2, where Hydraspes claims to be King of the Ethiopians in East and West.

reduces the Ethiopians to renegade Indians, corrupted by their proximity to Egypt:

ταῦτά με πρὸ ὑμῶν ἐπ' Ἰνδοὺς ἔτρεψεν ἐνθυμηθέντα περὶ αὐτῶν, ὥς λεπτότεροι μὲν τὴν ξύνεσιν οἱ τοιοῖδε ἄνθρωποι καθαρωτέrais ὁμιλοῦντες ἀκτίσιν, ἀληθέστεροι δὲ τὰς περὶ φύσεώς τε καὶ θεῶν δόξας, ἅτε ἀγγίθῃσι καὶ πρὸς ἀρχαῖς τῆς ζωογόνου καὶ θερμῆς οὐσίας οἰκοῦντες·

Here is what turned me to the Indians rather than to you, for I concluded that people of their kind have more refined perceptions, since they live in purer sunlight, and have truer views of nature and of the gods, being close to the gods and living near the sources of warm, life-giving nature (VA VI 11.10).

Philostratus' India bears strong similarities to Heliodorus' Ethiopia, whose king, after all, bears the name of an Indian river, Hydaspes.⁴⁵ Here too we find a Greek-speaking and peace-loving king, Phraotes, a pupil of the Brahmins, who like Heliodorus' Gymnosophists form an advisory cabinet to their king. Just as the Gymnosophists know the contents of a letter that has not yet been delivered, the Brahmins' foresight means that they do not need to be told who Apollonius is and what he wants.⁴⁶ As in Heliodorus, the country in which they live is of exceptional fertility and produces plants of exceptional size, a sign of divine proximity and good will.⁴⁷ In Heliodorus one reaches Ethiopia by travelling through Egypt, which is a sort of half-way house to divine wisdom; so in Philostratus the Caucasus acts as a sort of filter, its heights allowing a preliminary access to heaven.⁴⁸ Just as Heliodorus ends by re-centring the world on Ethiopia, so Philostratus marks out the hill of the Brahmins as the centre of India and an *omphalos*, the word used to designate Delphi as the centre of the world:

φασὶ δ' οἰκεῖν τὰ μέσα τῆς Ἰνδικῆς. καὶ τὸν ὄχθον ὀμφαλὸν ποιοῦνται τοῦ λόφου τούτου, πῦρ τε ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ὀργιάζουσιν, ὃ φασιν ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἡλίου ἀκτίνων αὐτοὶ ἔλκειν· τούτῳ καὶ τὸν ὕμνον ἡμέραν ἅπασαν ἐς μεσημβρίαν ὥδουσιν.

⁴⁵ Although Heliodorus' Ethiopia is located up-river of Egypt and identified with the city of Meroe, a number of eastern, as opposed to southern, details inform it. Foremost among these are the names of Ethiopian individuals.

⁴⁶ Heliodorus X 4.3, Philostratus III 16.

⁴⁷ Heliodorus X 5.2, Philostratus III 5.1–2.

⁴⁸ Hanus 1995:89–90. On the symbolic nature of Philostratus' geography in general, see Elsner 1997.

They claim to inhabit the centre of India, and regard the peak of this hill as its navel. On it they worship a mystic fire that they claim personally to light from the sun's rays. They sing their hymn to this fire every day about noon (VA VI 11.10).

This hill is also the centre of Indian Sun-worship, and it is during the interview there with Iarchas that the work's profoundest theology emerges, including a discussion of the transmigration of souls.⁴⁹ Its geographical centrality is metonymic for its centrality in the text's moral and spiritual economy.

If Heliodorus' Ethiopia is eventually unmasked as a fictionalised site of Emesan aspiration and negotiated accommodation with Hellenism, it is not difficult and difficult not to read Philostratus' India in the same light. The two texts, I am arguing, operate with a similar solar semiotic system, a similar spiritualised and symbolic cartography, and are negotiating similar accommodations with mainstream Hellenism. The presence of Julia Domna behind Philostratus' text, conspicuously advertised at the very beginning, sensitises the reader to its solar agenda, and suggests that Philostratus' India, like Heliodorus' Ethiopia, is in some sense an analogue or cipher for Emesa.

Another hint to this effect is given by the prominence of Damis in the Indian section. As we have seen, Damis is paraded as Julia Domna's contribution to the work, and, while it is natural that Philostratus should use an apparatus of authentication where authentication is most at issue, namely in the most exotic sections of the narrative where credibility is most stretched, Damis surely also functions as a sign that certain material is particularly pertinent to her interests, perhaps even supplied by her.⁵⁰ We have no way of knowing, of course, how closely any of the doctrine ascribed to the Indians reflects what might have been actually taught by the theologians of Emesa, and in a way even to frame the question in this way misses the point. Even in criticising Greek practice, Philostratus' Brahmins represent a fully Hellenised ideal, as does Heliodorus' Meroe. Like Heliodorus, Philostratus presents an oriental Sun-cult that offers nothing unfamiliar or shocking, which coheres with

⁴⁹ Philostratus III 19–23.

⁵⁰ I sidestep the issue of whether Damis is in any sense authentic, or whether his notebooks, genuine or forged, really existed. His function as a textual marker for a particular agenda does not depend on the answer to these questions.

and underwrites Apollonius' Pythagorean doctrine, and subscribes to Greek ethical norms.⁵¹

Within the semiotic system of what we might term the Hellenised wing of the Sun-cult, then, mythical realms in the regions of the world closest to the sun appear to function as sites of transferred discourse. Heliodorus' Ethiopia is coloured in detail by welcome associations from the whole of the Greek tradition, going back to Homer and Herodotus, depicting the Ethiopians as just and pious.⁵² Apollonius, however, treats Ethiopia polemically and gives priority to India, calling the Naked Ones "more inferior to the Indians than they are superior to the Egyptians" (σοφία δὲ Ἰνδῶν λείπεσθαι πλέον ἢ προὔχειν Αἰγυπτίων, VI 6.5). Later, he reminds them that they were originally Indians, but having been exiled in shameful circumstances have cast off their Ethiopian (that is to say Indian) identity and assumed Egyptian ways of worship.⁵³

σοφίας δὲ ταύτης ἐγένεσθε μὲν καὶ αὐτοὶ Πυθαγόρα ζύμβουλοι χρόνον, ὃν τὰ Ἰνδῶν ἐπηγεῖτε, Ἰνδοὶ τὸ ἀρχαῖον [πάλαι] ὄντες· ἐπεὶ δ' αἰδοῖ τοῦ λόγου, δι' ὃν ἐκ μηνιμάτων τῆς γῆς ἀφίκεσθε δεῦρο, ἕτεροι μᾶλλον ἐβούλεσθε δοκεῖν ἢ Αἰθίοπες οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰνδῶν ἤκοντες, πάντα ὑμῖν ἐς τοῦτο ἐδράτο· ὅθεν ἐγυμνώθητε μὲν σκευῆς, ὁπόση ἐκεῖθεν, ὥσπερ ξυναποδιδόμενοι τὸ Αἰθίοπες εἶναι, θεοὺς δὲ θεραπεύειν ἐψηφίσασθε τὸν Αἰγύπτιον μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν ὑμέτερον τρόπον, ἐς λόγους τε οὐκ ἐπιτηδεῖους ὑπὲρ Ἰνδῶν κατέστητε, ὥσπερ οὐκ αὐτοὶ διαβεβλημένοι τῷ ἀφ' οὗον διαβεβλήσθαι ἤκειν.

You yourselves supported Pythagoras in this wisdom so long as you spoke well of the Indians, since you too were originally Indians. But when you were shamed by the report that the displeasure of the earth caused you

⁵¹ At this period Pythagoreanism was being grafted into Platonic philosophy and becoming regarded as central to Greek *paideia* by reason of its priority to other forms of Greek philosophy; see Swain 1999b.

⁵² On the details from which the fictional Ethiopia is constructed, see Morgan 1982, esp. 235–243; Hägg 2000 (2004), Morgan 2005.

⁵³ The circumstances of the original exile are narrated in III 20. While they still lived in India, the Ethiopians had murdered their king, Ganges, whose ghost drove them to human sacrifice to appease him. Despite the equivocal comments of Thespiesion (VI 20.5), maintaining, as a *reductio ad absurdum* of Apollonius' position, that the Spartans ought to have instituted human sacrifice, there is not the slightest hint that Philostratus' Ethiopians continue to practise human sacrifice, or anything in common between the expiatory sacrifice mentioned by Philostratus and the celebratory rite of sacrificing captives after a victorious military campaign depicted by Heliodorus. Nevertheless, it is striking how often the motif of human sacrifice enters these discourses. If we pursue the connection with the polemic directed at Elagabalus, it may be that Philostratus is deflecting the barbarity away from India, as his representative of the truest and best Sun-cult, and that Heliodorus' abolition of the Ethiopian sacrifice as part of his construction of an ideal solar state is, at some level, a response to that.

to come here, and you preferred to be anything rather than Ethiopians arrived from India, then all your actions were directed to that. You stripped yourselves of your original clothing, as if simultaneously casting off your Ethiopian identity, you determined to worship the gods in the Egyptian way rather than your own, and you began to tell unseemly stories about the Indians, as if you yourselves were not discredited by having come from discreditable people (VI 11.13, there follows a polemic against Egyptian theriomorphic deities).

The polemical tone of Apollonius' views on Ethiopia, which are nowhere contradicted by Philostratus, suggests a response to and a reversal of an earlier estimation. If so, this is evidence that there was a level of contestation within solar semiotics as to which was the most appropriate literary analogue for the Emesan cult.

Apollonius of Tyana was a person of ongoing interest to the Severan dynasty. Caracalla, Julia Domna's son, dedicated a sanctuary to him at Tyana, an occasion at which Philostratus may well have been present.⁵⁴ If Philostratus is to be believed, Julia Domna herself made it her business that Apollonius' life should be afforded proper literary treatment and fed material into Philostratus' work. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Alexander Severus had an image of Apollonius, along with Christ, Abraham and Orpheus and Alexander the Great, in his private shrine.⁵⁵ We can surmise in broad terms what this interest was and how it was exploited. I have argued that it is possible to discern two factions within the Emesan cult: the 'fundamentalists' represented by Elagabalus, and the Hellenisers represented by Julia Domna. The attraction of Apollonius to the latter was precisely that he allowed Sun-worship to be associated with Hellenism; his very name encapsulates the combination. Philostratus' biography has two facets: on the one hand, and more or less factually, it demonstrates Apollonius in action as sophist and political activist within the Greco-Roman world, and on the other, less or more fictionally, as traveller to mythical lands in pursuit of mystic wisdom, which he brings back to Greece and integrates into Greek intellectual systems. These two aspects are not a mismatch: they are both essential to the text's agenda. The strategy allows the ascetic wandering holy man to be placed at the very centre of Greek culture; the prominence afforded his sophistic *paideia* guarantees the respectability of the solar wisdom he embodies and secures a place for

⁵⁴ Cassius Dio LXXVII 18.4; cf. Flinterman 1995:25–26.

⁵⁵ SHA *Severus Alexander* 19.2, 31.5.

it within Hellenism. Apollonius worships the sun at regular intervals throughout the text, with due attention to the proper ways and times for doing so, but the asceticism and Hellenism which define him also serve to distance him from the fundamentalism of unreconstructed Emesan cult practice. Human sacrifice, as with Heliodorus, is a case in point: Apollonius rejects even animal sacrifice, but he is made to defend himself at length before Domitian against a charge of performing human sacrifice.⁵⁶ In this way he, and through him Julia Domna and her faction, are distanced from the polemic directed at Elagabalus. His Indian adventures and his own encounters with Roman Emperors are replete with the Hellenic rhetoric of the good king, very similar to that surrounding Hydaspes in Heliodorus. All this would fit very well with the agenda of a dynasty with eastern roots, eager to legitimise itself and not to jettison its religious heritage but to accommodate it to the Greco-Roman mainstream.

Although Philostratus says that his *Life of Apollonius* sprang from a suggestion of Julia Domna, the work is not explicitly or formally dedicated to her: this is generally taken to mean that it was actually written after her death in 217. Its composition thus belongs in the aftermath of the reign of Elagabalus. Although the black stone was shipped back to Emesa, the temple in Rome was not shut down, and Sol seems to have continued to be worshipped there. Information is lacking, but we can imagine that the cult would try to negotiate a self-effacing re-accommodation with respectability and distance itself from the discredited immediate past.⁵⁷ Alexander Severus' collection of gurus is known to us from the notoriously inventive *Historia Augusta*: but the factual accuracy of the report is less important than its symbolic message. It betokens a new inclusiveness, a desire to find a place for everyone and repel no one, a syncretism of salvation religions. Within this context it is difficult not to connect Alexander's image of Apollonius with the biography of him written at the behest of his great-aunt: in other words he stands for an acceptable and Hellenised version of the Syrian Sun-god.

I have argued that Philostratus and Heliodorus' both of them linked to Emesa, both use fictional constructions of idealised solar states at the margins of the world as a displaced means to articulate a message

⁵⁶ Philostratus VII 20.1, VIII 7.35–45.

⁵⁷ SHA *Severus Alexander* repeatedly stresses both the new emperor's removal of traces of the previous reign, and his thorough grounding in Hellenic *paideia*.

about the Emesan cult, and that their message is broadly similar in accommodating the cult to Hellenic norms. The issue of dating must now be addressed. Scholarly opinion is divided on Heliodorus' date.⁵⁸ In my view the objective case for a date of composition in the middle of the fourth century, based on similarities between an episode in the novel and the siege of Nisibis in 350, remains unanswered, if not exactly conclusive; others have opted for a date in the second half of the third century. But it has also been suggested that the novelist is to be identified with the sophist Heliodorus the Arab mentioned in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists* and plausibly linked with the circle of Julia Domna: the dynasts of Emesa were Arabs, though it seems more common in sources of the period to refer to people from Emesa as Phoenicians.⁵⁹ The earlier date might seem to suit the present argument better, in that it would allow the two texts to be the product of the same narrow cultural environment, whose authors were personally acquainted and possibly rivals. Heliodorus the Arab was already an established sophist in 213, when Philostratus heard him speaking, and probably slightly senior.⁶⁰ On this hypothesis the composition of the *Aethiopica* might precede that of the *Life of Apollonius*, opening up the possibility that Philostratus' polemical treatment of the Ethiopian Naked Ones was a response to none other than Heliodorus the novelist. This is an attractive idea. However, there is a biographical report that cannot be easily dismissed, that the *Aethiopica* is the youthful production of someone who later became a Christian bishop in Thessaly and I have argued elsewhere that Heliodorus is familiar with the semiotic system of Christianity which he inverts in a playful or even polemical way.⁶¹ This would make more sense on the later dating. And in fact the Emesan subtext of his novel would make equally good sense as a rearguard reassertion of paganism from around the time of Julian the Apostate, who himself wrote a *Hymn to the Sun*.

⁵⁸ On the issues see Morgan 1996:417–421. References to earlier bibliography are given there.

⁵⁹ This is what Heliodorus terms himself, and Herodian on several occasions refers to Emesa as a Phoenician city. Aitken 2004:275–284 interprets the role of the Phoenician in Philostratus' *Heroicus* as inscribing the presence of the Phoenician (i.e. Emesan) imperial family. Her reading of this work in the context of Alexander Severus' 'cleansing' of Rome after the reign of Elagabalus is not dissimilar to the approach to the *Life of Apollonius* advanced in this paper.

⁶⁰ *Lives of the Sophists* 625–6.

⁶¹ Morgan 2005.

My interpretation of these two works does not absolutely require that one author knew the work of the other, but the similarities between our two texts are probably sufficient for us to conclude that we are not dealing with independent employment of similar strategies of displacement and image-systems. If my dating is correct, Heliodorus' is the later of the two texts, and we must imagine that Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* continued to be read in Emesa a century or so after it was written, and that it contributed to the broad system of signification within which Heliodorus articulated his message.⁶²

⁶² See above n. 53 for a possible instance of Heliodorus rehabilitating Ethiopia in the face of Philostratus' demotion of it. I am also struck by his reference to the Temple of Apollo at Delphi as the *Apollonion* (III 18.1); the word is rare but not unattested, but nowhere else used of the Delphic temple. Although, as noted above, Apollo is ultimately identified with the Ethiopian Sun-god, Delphi is only the beginning of the road to definitive solar piety and wisdom in this novel. Could Heliodorus be hinting that his version of the Sun-cult supersedes that of Apollonius and Philostratus? Apart from the *Life of Apollonius*, the hymn to Thetis in the *Heroicus* (53.10) seems to be elaborated by Heliodorus in his account of the Delphic ceremony (*Aeth.* III 2.4).

PYTHAGOREANISM AND THE PLANETARY DEITIES:
THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND LITERARY MASTER-STRUCTURE
OF THE *VITA APOLLONII*

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The two main topics of the “old quest” in the literature on Apollonius—comparisons of the *Vita Apollonii* with New Testament writings and the source-critical search for the “historical Apollonius”—have gradually been replaced by research that focuses on the role of Philostratus as an author in his own right. This renewed interest in Philostratus has led to a general rehabilitation of the *Vita Apollonii*: its literary qualities, its political message, and its role in the cultural politics of Greeks under Roman rule are only some of the topics that have received favourable assessments in the recent Philostratus-Forschung.¹ There is, however, one area of research in which the reputation of both Philostratus and the *Vita* seem to have remained relatively unchanged and thus quite negative: its value as a philosophical text. In the introduction to the most recent edition of the *Life*,² Christopher Jones commented:

It is a feature of Philostratus’ text, however, that Apollonius’s philosophy is merely sketched in a few superficial strokes. (...) The ‘philosophical’ Apollonius appears mainly in the conversations that he holds with Damis and a few others. (...) Philosophically, these conversations are conducted on a very amateurish level. (...) By contrast, Apollonius is made to act very much like the public speakers whom Philostratus was later to describe in his *Lives of the Sophists*.

This assessment can be virtually paralleled by the view expressed in Ueberweg-Praechter’s *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*:

Weniger scharfe philosophische Prägung zeigt Philostratos, der im Anfange des dritten Jahrhunderts nach Chr. auf Wunsch der Kaiserin Julia Domna eine Biographie des Apollonios von Tyana verfasste. Das Bekenntnis zum Pythagorasideal, das in diesem Werke enthalten ist, verbietet der

¹ For cumulative overviews of the current scholarship on the *Vita Apollonii* since the 80’s we can refer to Koskeniemi 1994, Francis 1998, Hägg 2004 and Schirren 2005:1–13.

² Jones 2005:9.

Geschichte des Neupythagoreismus an Philostratos vorüberzugehen, so geringen Wert auch sein Abenteuerroman als Quelle für das Leben des Apollonios besitzt und so sehr sich in dem Verfasser dem philosophisch-theologischen Interesse das des Rhetors und Literaten zur Seite drängt.³

The appreciation of the *Vita* as a literary work has improved, but not the general assessment, that it is in essence “only” a literary work and not a text deserving a place in the history of philosophy. Its author is seen as a man of letters, as a sophist, but not as a philosopher, nor even as someone who had the intellectual ambition, *casu quo* capacity to give a serious account of Apollonius’ philosophy. On this the Philostratus-Forschung still seems unanimous.⁴ In this paper we shall argue against this dichotomy and try to show that Philostratus did manage to write a work of philosophy, a rather unique work of philosophy even, because

³ Ueberweg-Præchter 1957:520.

⁴ That the *Life* does not contain any serious philosophy is repeated in many variations. Dillon 1977:341 refused to treat Apollonius in his chapter on “The Neopythagoreans” (pp. 341–382): “since he was much more of a prophet than a philosopher.” Bowie 1978:1666: “...his aim was most plausibly that of a professional writer, to produce a well-rounded and entertaining piece of literature, rather than to further a propagandist interpretation of Apollonius as a Pythagorean sage. (...) Philostratus’ other writings give no hint of enthusiasm for Neo-Pythagoreans or Apollonius.” Knoles 1981:III writes that literary conventions are more important to Philostratus than Apollonius’ philosophy, on this topic the *Life* contains only a “somewhat shallow discussion” merely “symbolizing Apollonius’ commitment to philosophy” and p. 228: “not a substantial discussion of philosophical topics.” Anderson 1986:138 offers an echo of Meyer’s (1917:422) famous general assessment of the *Life* as “journalistisches Machwerk”: “His ‘philosophy’ could have come just as readily from any philosophic journalist; it is the property of any educated eclectic down to the mindless Maximus of Tyre.” Dzielska 1986 concluded that what Philostratus wrote on Apollonius’ philosophy (cfr. §4 “Apollonius’ philosophy”, pp. 129–152) is “inadequate and strays from the historical truth” (p. 129) and p. 191: “Philostratus’ Pythagoreanism... is very superficial.” Flinterman argued that Philostratus did want to present Apollonius as a Pythagorean philosopher (p. 60) but there is little philosophical content in the *Vita*, Philostratus’ attitude towards his subject is at times ambiguous and his main motivation for writing the *Vita*—apart from the imperial commission—was that he found the material “attractive for literary adaptation.” (p. 66) See also Hahn 2003:92 quoted in Van Uytengahes contribution to this volume, note 73. The list could go on. An important correction has been made by Chiara Cremonesi 2005:10–12 and passim: she has argued that the definition of philosophy adopted by most Philostratus-scholars has too strong a focus on doctrine and theoretical discussions. She argues that we should be mindful of the work of Pierre Hadot and his view on ancient philosophy as first and foremost a way of life. See his *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*. Collection des études augustinienes. Série antiquité; 88. Paris, 1981 (translated by Michael Chase as *Philosophy as a way of life: spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault*. Oxford, 1995) and *Qu’est-ce que la philosophie antique?* Paris, 1995. In that sense the presentation of Apollonius’ way of life is ancient philosophy. We agree with Cremonesi but will argue that there is also more doctrine and theory in the *Life* than previously accepted.

we can only understand its deeper philosophical message by adopting a thoroughly literary approach.

Although the assessment of the literary qualities of the *Vita* has moved away from Lesky's famous judgement as "monströs aber interessant",⁵ we still lack an analysis of the general structure of the work. Several micro-analyses of passages in the *Life* are becoming available⁶ but the Philostratus-Forschung has not yet produced an overall analysis of the structure of the *Vita Apollonii*, nor even an analysis of how Philostratus distributed his material over the individual books. We do have some reflections on the question of why Philostratus chose to divide this work into eight books,⁷ but no theories have been put forward regarding the internal logic Philostratus chose to follow in distributing the staggering amount of stories, subplots, scientific excursions, mythological anecdotes, historical references, literary allusions and philosophical debates over these eight books.⁸ The wide, even wild, variety of topics certainly makes the biography as *poikilos* as the man it claims to commemorate, but perhaps we can find an angle from which all these colours form a harmonious picture. In other words, we shall try to find the logic underlying the meandering flow of this *logos*.

Our search for structuring elements in the *Life* first led to the observation that Philostratus shaped some of the books through the use of ring compositions. The most obvious example can be found in book

⁵ Lesky 1971:936: "Das monströse, aber interessante Werk (...)"

⁶ The dissertation by Knoles 1981 was for a long time the only monograph on the *Life* as a literary work; but see now the (as yet unpublished) thesis of Miles 2005a and his contribution to this volume; there is also much material *passim* in Anderson 1986, Whitmarsh 2004 and Schirren 2005. See further the "literary" contributions to this volume, especially Schirren and Gyselinck-Demoen.

⁷ Bowie 1978:1664–5: "The work's division into eight books would be unparalleled for a biography: but this is precisely the form of Achilles Tatius' and Chariton's novels, and is the rough scale of several others." And in note 49: "It is relevant that Xenophon's *Cyropaedeia* has eight books: it falls on the same frontier between biography and novel." Anderson 1986:238, note 57 agrees: "But the eight-book division does indeed recall the *Cyropaedia*..."; Swain 1996:383 refers to "the 'historiographical' division into eight books", with references to both Bowie and Anderson *supra*.

⁸ Rommel 1923 has made a classification of "die naturwissenschaftlich-paradoxographischen Exkurse" in Philostratos (and other writers) but there is no attempt to integrate them in the literary structure of the *Life*. Billault 2000:60–61 gives an analysis of II 11–21 and concludes: "...le mouvement du texte résulte de fréquents changements de point de vue qui paraissent à chaque fois naturels parce que Philostrate présente au lecteur comme une évidence la légitimité du voisinage entre narration et exposition." And "À l'époque impériale, l'abondance de la matière, la libéralité d'agencement et le goût de la variété et de la surprise" can be found in numerous works and are typical for the taste of both the public and the artists.

III, which starts with a description of the Hyphasis river. The author draws attention to the trees that “grow along the banks, giving off a kind of balm which the Indians use as a marriage perfume, and if those invited to the wedding omit to sprinkle this perfume on the couple, the ceremony is considered to be invalid and contracted without the favour of Aphrodite (III 1).” In the next paragraph, Philostratus adds that not only the banks of the river, but also the famous peacock fish, “which breeds only in this river”, are dedicated to Aphrodite. (III 1) After a description of unicorn wild asses, Apollonius and his party encounter “a woman who was black from the top of her head to her breasts, and completely white from her breasts to her feet.” The sage immediately realizes that “such women in India are considered sacred to Aphrodite (III 3).”⁹ So, in the first three chapters we have three explicit references to the goddess of love. This could be a simple case of association, but at the end of the book we find a corresponding reference to Aphrodite: book III ends with Apollonius visiting her famous shrine in Paphos. “There they met a ship and sailed to Cyprus, putting in at Paphos where the idol of Aphrodite is. Apollonius admired its symbolic shape, and gave the priests much advice about the rites of the sanctuary.” (III 58)

Once we realize Philostratus has put references to Aphrodite at the beginning and at the end of this book, we should review its contents and ask ourselves whether this ring structure points to some specific theme in book III. Do the initial and final references point the reader to other passages in this book or to a specific reading of certain passages? We should not aspire to explain every single passage in the book, but we should check whether there is a significantly high number of references to Aphrodite and her realm making this goddess in some

⁹ The commentators have offered no source—Greek, Indian or other—for Apollonius’ explanation but as a hypothesis we would suggest that the link between Aphrodite and the black and white colours of the woman could be the planet Venus, who is the first “star” to appear at night and the last visible “star” in the morning. According to Diogenes Laertius VIII 48 and Aetius III 14.1 Pythagoras was the first to have realized that this star was in fact in both cases the planet Venus. Although another ancient tradition ascribed this insight to Parmenides (cfr. Diogenes Laertius IX 23) and although modern authorities like Walter Burkert (1962:282; 285–286) have raised doubts about the historical role of Pythagoras regarding this identification, Philostratus would have favoured the Pythagorean tradition. That Apollonius knows that black-and-white women were sacred to Aphrodite in India is certainly an example of his enormous *paideia* but in this hypothesis it would also be part of the parallels between Apollonius and Pythagoras. Finally, it would further corroborate our reading of the planetary deities as structural elements in the *Life*.

way into the organizing principle of the book. At first hand, this hardly seems the case, since book III contains the famous visit to the Indian sages who are primarily described as worshippers of the sun god, not of Aphrodite. The way these sages lived and the way they interacted with Apollonius are described from chapter 10 onwards. At first the discussion had centred on self-knowledge, on the soul and on the memory of sages like Pythagoras of past incarnations, but from chapter 19 onwards the discussions between Apollonius and the sages take a specific turn. Apollonius who, like Pythagoras, remembers his own identity during the Trojan war, asks Iarchas, "Would you say then that, before you entered this body, you were some Trojan or Achaeon or so-and-so, like Pythagoras revealed himself to be Euphorbus (III 19)?" Instead of giving a direct answer, Iarchas starts criticizing Homer and—in the best Pythagorean tradition¹⁰—criticizes the morality of the Homeric poems. "‘Troy was destroyed,’ said the Indian, ‘by the Achaeans that sailed there at the time, and you Greeks have been destroyed by the tales about it (III 19).’" Iarchas points out that there are "more numerous and more inspired (more godlike: *θειότεροι*) men... than the heroes who sacked Troy." By this he means not only other Greeks, but also Egyptians and Indians. So to undermine the Homero-centrism and the Helleno-centrism of Apollonius (and most Greek readers), Iarchas offers a comparison between the noblest of Greek heroes—Achilles—and his own former incarnation, the Indian king Ganges. The *synkrisis* turns into a double criticism of the immorality and violence Homer and classical mythology ascribed to the workings of Aphrodite: "Now Homer makes Achilles come to Troy because of Helen, and says that he had captured twelve cities by sea and eleven by land, and that he flew into a fury when the king took a woman away from him, showing himself harsh and savage." King Ganges on the other hand was a *builder* of cities, and only fought wars in national self-defence which is "far better, especially when a woman is at stake who probably did not mind being abducted." Also when Ganges' wife was taken by a king who was acting "in sheer lawlessness and lust, he did not break his oaths (III 20)." The views of the Indian sage are of course in accordance with the Pythagorean theories on general self-control, and especially on sexual

¹⁰ Also an element in the Pythagorean Homer-reception. Armand Delatte 1915:107–136 has discussed the tradition in his chapter on "l'exégèse pythagoricienne des poèmes homériques"; see also the chapter on the Pythagoreans in Lamberton 1986:31–43.

asceticism limiting the realm of "Aphrodite" to procreative sex within a monogamous relationship; all other forms of erotic activities (adultery, the keeping of concubines, prostitution, pederasty,...) are seen as the consequence of a lack of self-control, or even as positive expressions of depravity.¹¹

Problems in the realm of marriage, procreation and sexuality also form the link between a series of people who come to seek the help of the sages and of Apollonius. In III 38 "the Wise Men were interrupted by the messenger bringing some Indians in need of cures." The first case is that of a boy of sixteen who is possessed by a spirit who is in love with him. The spirit turns out to be the one of a man who had died in war "and died still in love with his wife, but the woman broke their marriage bond three days after his death by marrying another man, and from that time (...) he had loathed the love of women and had transferred his affection to the boy." On the other hand, in the next chapter, a married woman who had suffered seven miscarriages was cured through a rite with a hare to be performed by her husband (III 39). The following chapter introduces a father who had lost several sons once they had started drinking wine. These cures in fact cover most of the possible relations between people: husband and wife, infidelity and adultery, the relation between parents and children, between *erastes* and *eromenos*; they even cover relationships beyond the grave, one might add. By their magical-medicinal cures the sages managed to turn the ideal sexual morality they had been discussing with Apollonius into a reality for the common people.

However, Love or *Eros* is also a theme in the learned discussions on natural philosophy in this book. In fact, the discussion that had been interrupted by those Indians in need of a cure, had centred on the nature of the Universe: the Indians had explained to Apollonius that the Universe consisted not of four but of five elements, ether being the

¹¹ See e.g. Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorica* 47–48 (general principles); 50 and 132 (Crotonians send away their concubines); 57 (marital fidelity); or Ocellus Lucanus, *On the Nature of the Universe* 44 (Thesleff 1965:135): "The first postulate is that sexual association should occur never for pleasure, but only for procreation of children. Those powers and instruments and appetites ministering to copulation were implanted in men by divinity, not for the sake of voluptuousness, but for the perpetuation of the race." (translation Guthrie 1988:209, §4) and 55 (Thesleff 1965:137; Guthrie 1988:210) "All unnatural connections should be prevented, especially those attended with wanton insolence. But such as harmonize with nature should be encouraged, such as are affected with temperance for the purpose of producing a temperate and legitimate offspring."

element of the immortal and the divine.¹² They also taught that the Universe was alive and that one should not conceive of it as either male or female, but of both sexes “since it has intercourse with itself, and performs both the mother’s and the father’s role with respect to generation. It feels a desire for itself (ἔρωτά τε ἑαυτοῦ ἵσχει) more intense than that of any two other beings, and this joins (ἁρμόττει) and unites it, and there is nothing unreasonable about its coalescence (III 35).” This *eros* and harmony that keep all the parts of the cosmos together are steered by a *nous* just as the *nous* is the driving and organising principle in single beings. This harmony was also described as justice and Iarchas goes on to say that there is a direct connection between injustice among humans and a negative reaction from nature or the universal *Nous*: “For instance, the sufferings resulting from drought arise from the mind of the Universe, when justice (δίκη) is banished from mankind and treated with dishonour (III 34).” The clearest example is the story of the unjust ancestors of the Ethiopians who were rejected by the earth itself because of their crimes: “As long as the Ethiopians lived here as subjects of king Ganges, the earth fed them plentifully and the gods protected them. But when they killed this king, the other Indians considered them polluted and the earth no longer allowed them to stay. It destroyed the seed that they put in it before it came to the ear, it caused their wives to miscarry, and gave poor fodder to the cattle, and wherever they founded a city the earth caved in and gave way (III 20).” Apollonius will encounter the Ethiopians in book VI, which is—as we hope to show—dedicated to Ares and therefore both thematically and numerically the mirror-image of the third book. By implication, justice and harmony in individuals and as leading principles in the interpersonal relations amongst men will entail success in city-building, and fertility in nature: crops will grow, cattle will prosper and women will give birth to healthy babies. This link between moral harmony and harmony in/with nature is the allegorical background of the fairy tales about the “land of plenty” in which the Sages live: the Indian sages live in perfect harmony with themselves and therefore with nature, which spontaneously provides them with all they need. These miraculous tales thus have a philosophical-allegorical function within

¹² For a discussion of the natural philosophy in this passage and for further examples of Pythagorean texts adopting the theory of five elements we can refer to Zeller 2006, III.2:149, note 4 and 171.

the *Life* that lifts them beyond the level of mindless entertainment or credulous superstition.

Iarchas also discusses the role of the divine in the cosmos, and here he proposes a “paradeigma” (III 35) that is capable of expressing the way the Universe is governed. He compares the Universe to an Egyptian ship with many captains “sailing under the command of the eldest and most capable of them (III 35)”, all working together with soldiers offering protection, sailors raising the sails, and so on. These he explicitly compares with the many deities all assigned to their particular domain, “with the first and the most exalted position [assigned] to the God who engendered this being.” After a short intermezzo describing the amazement of Damis, further discussions between Apollonius and the sages are interrupted by the cures of the common people we have mentioned earlier.

The learned discussions between Apollonius and the sages also contain numerous references to the Pythagorean tradition. As it stands, the theory of a Universe consisting of five elements governed by a divine Nous and held together by an Eros creating a Harmony between all its parts is original, but it is definitely eclectic in its references to other philosophical systems, religious doctrines and previous cosmogonic theories. Of course, the Pythagorean philosophers of the Imperial period were all united in their eclecticism rather than in any dogmatic adherence to a fixed Pythagorean system. The Middle Platonist or Neopythagorean Numenius of Apamea discussed the role of the Nous as the demiurge creating harmony in the Universe, and to express this harmony he used the same image of a ship sailing under the command of a captain.¹³ Harmony is a key term in the Orphic and Pythagorean worldview; Pythagoreanism developed a theory of universal harmony as early as Philolaus, whose authentic fragments discuss cosmic, mathematical, musical and medical harmony,¹⁴ and it remains a key notion in Hellenistic works such as the *On the nature of the Universe* ascribed to Ocellus Lucanus. Eros as a central cosmogonic force can of course be connected to Hesiod (*Theogony* 120–122), but the explicit references to the bisexual nature of the Universe and to the role of Eros also recall the bisexual Orphic Phanes-Eros, as was already observed by Zeller.¹⁵ The

¹³ Numenius, fragm. 17 (26 Leemans): the Nous as Demiurge and 18 (27 Leemans): the Nous-Demiurge as pilot.

¹⁴ Philolaus, fragm. 1, 2, 6, 7, 13 and 27.

¹⁵ Zeller 2006, III.2:171: “wie der orphische Phanes”; cfr. id., I.1, p. 130.

theory of Eros creating harmony between the five elements resembles the theory of Empedocles about *Philia* and *Neikos* alternatively “ruling” the four elements. In the Pythagorean tradition and also in the introduction to the *Life* (I 1) Empedocles was presented as a follower of Pythagorean doctrines, but in this context the only important observation is that the *Vita* proposes here a theory of the Universe that can be linked to Pythagorean traditions and in which eros plays an important role.

In conclusion, it would seem that the Aphrodite ring structure of book III does point to a number of crucial elements in the book: Love in its many forms is treated in mythology and literature, in moral theory, in everyday life, as a unifying force in the Universe and as the force creating harmony within individuals, between people, and between humanity in general and the forces of nature.

If we then turn to the next book, it is striking that, immediately after the ending of book III—in Aphrodite’s temple in Paphos—Philostratus lays his scene in Ephesus, the city of Artemis, and although the book starts with a description of the divine, popular and official response to his arrival in Ionia through oracles, large crowds and official embassies, in the second chapter we read: “He gave his first discourse to the Ephesians from the steps of the temple (τοῦ νεώ) (III 2).” In Ephesus the temple is the temple of Artemis. So can we say that Philostratus in some way or other organized the material in this book with reference to Artemis and to her astronomical equivalent, the moon? There are a peculiar number of small hints and oblique references. In IV 21 the text refers to “a woman admiral [who] sailed against you [the Greeks] from Caria with Xerxes (IV 21).” Philostratus does not volunteer the name of this woman but, as Jones points out in note 35, her name was Artemisia. In IV 36 Apollonius is approaching Rome and he meets Philolaus of Citium “near the grove of Aricia (IV 36).” The man is unknown and the only information given by Philostratus about the grove is its distance from Rome but, as Jones points out in note 60: “Aricia, near Rome, had a famous grove of Diana.” To readers of the *Aeneid* or *The Golden Bough* the grove needs no further introduction but *Diana Aricina* and the *Rex Nemorensis* were also known to readers of Strabo (V 3.12) or Pausanias (II 27.4). Now Artemis was not only identified with the Roman Diana, but, as the moon-goddess, she was also identified with Hecate. The sanctuary Apollonius marked out for Palamedes was “of the size that devotees of Enodia [Hecate] use (IV 13).” The Artemis of Ephesus was also identified with the Phrygian Mother of the Gods, Cybele or the Greek Rhea. The sanctuary of Leben in Crete “gets its

name from the fact that a headland extends out from it in the shape of a lion. Many such rock formations occur by chance, and a story is told about this headland that it was one of the lions once harnessed to Rhea's chariot (IV 34)."

These are only minor references, all of which could be ascribed to narrative coincidences and none of which allows us to infer an Artemisian theme for this book unless we find further corroboration. We should first check then whether Philostratus has given a ring structure to the fourth book as well. The two temples linking the end of book III with the beginning of book IV could point to a ring structure in the latter book that offers a mirror image of the former. So do we have thematic references to Artemis at the end of book IV? We believe we do, but they are not as explicit as in the beginning of the previous book. The final chapter (IV 47) mentions that Apollonius wished to see the Ocean tides. Now the link between the Moon and the Ocean tides was well known in Antiquity, but Philostratus does not mention any theories about this phenomenon at this point in his narrative. He does offer two opposing theories in the beginning of the next book: in the second chapter of book V he will acknowledge the general theory about the Ocean tides: "As for what is said about the moon's appearance (*φαίνεσθαι*) when it is new, full, and waning, I know that that affects the Ocean, which follows the moon's phases by sinking and rising in sympathy with it (V 2)." It is important to note that this theory is only acknowledged (*οἶδα*) as common knowledge (*φασί*), but that Apollonius and Philostratus uphold another theory that connects the tides with the underworld, the souls of the dead and with the theme of the fifth book, namely Hermes. Through this particular literary device Philostratus has connected book IV with book V. The endorsed theory is proleptic—so to speak—for the theme of the fifth book; the rejected theory is analeptic for the theme of the previous book, Artemis or the moon.

Furthermore, in the final chapters of book IV there are two other references to Artemis, although, as we have said, they are not as direct as the three Aphrodite-references in the opening chapters of book III. If, in book IV, Philostratus did indeed intend to create a mirror-image of the ring structure of book three, he did so through a number of rather delicate literary allusions. The first one is still quite obvious: the antepenultimate chapter of the book contains the famous story of the healing or resurrection of the girl "who appeared to have died just at the time of her wedding (IV 45)." The role of Apollonius is explicitly compared to Heracles in the Alcestis-myth. "The girl spoke, and went

back to her father's house like Alcestis revived by Heracles." A reader, who knew his classics, also knew that the Alcestis-tragedy was triggered by her husband Admetus, who forgot to make the necessary wedding sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. This gives an extra dimension to the dramatic setting of the rescuing by Apollonius of a virgin-bride who had not yet consummated her marriage. That Apollonius gave his reward "as an extra dowry for the girl" is another example of his showing the world how the rites and customs are to be properly observed. The second reference is perhaps a little more difficult to interpret: the all but final chapter (IV 46) is made up of short letters between the philosopher Musonius and Apollonius. The main references are to Socrates, the *Apologia* and being rescued from prison, but the first letter continues the Apollonius-Heracles-theme of the previous chapter. "Apollonius greets Musonius the philosopher. I wish to come to you and share your conversation and your roof so as to help you, at least if you admit that Heracles once liberated Theseus from Hades." Theseus was in Hades with his partner-in-crime Peirithous. They were being punished for the insolence of trying to abduct Hades' wife, Persephone, although Theseus had accompanied Peirithous to the underworld because the latter had once helped Theseus to carry away another daughter of Zeus, the virgin girl Helen. Both in Plutarch's *Life of Theseus* 31 and in such sources as Hyginus, *Fabula* 79, the young Helen was captured in the absence of the Dioscuri, while Helen was dancing or sacrificing in the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia.¹⁶ On a surface reading Heracles is the saviour demigod connecting chapters 45, 46 and 47. In this last chapter "the Pillars" are mentioned without further explanation. None is required of course, but we should note that they are also analeptically "explained" at the beginning of book V as the "the Pillars which Heracles is said to have set up." So the end of book IV and the beginning of book V are connected by a double explanatory analepsis. Chapters 45 and 46 refer to Heracles rescuing consorts of offenders of Artemis and the final chapter mentions the Pillars and the Ocean tides, later connected to Heracles and to the common theory of the phases of the moon. So it would seem that Philostratus combined the Heracles-theme with the secondary theme of two rather obvious and one perhaps hypothetical reference to Artemis.

¹⁶ Hyginus, *Fabulae* 79, 1; Jean-Yves Boriaud, Budé, 64–65: "Theseus Aegei et Aethrae Pitthei filiae filius cum Pirithoo Ixionis filio Helenam Tyndarei et Ledae filiam virginem de fano Dianae sacrificantem rapuerunt et Athenas detulerunt..."

Depending on whether we accept only two or all three, the referential structure of book III is mirrored completely, or with a small variation, in the ring structure of book IV. At the same time Philostratus has found an ingenious way of linking book IV with book V.

We take the two theories explaining the Ocean's tides as referential links between IV and V, between Artemis and Hermes, because there is a thematic link between these two divinities. The main theme of book IV is "phainesthai": the moon and its phases point to the theme of different identities, loss of identity, false appearances and apparitions. The next book, on Hermes, will have falsehood and lies as one of its main themes.

Where do we find "phainesthai" in all its meanings in book IV? Moreover, do these thematic passages corroborate the small, sometimes obscured references to Artemis, Diana, Hecate and Rhea-Cybele we have mentioned earlier? The chapter containing the reference to the woman general Artemisia was actually about the loss of identity of the Athenians who had become effeminate (IV 21): "she had a man's clothing and arms, while you [are] more dainty than Xerxes' harem." In the case of the Spartan ambassadors Apollonius met on his way to Olympia (IV 27), Philostratus mentions that "there was nothing Spartan about their appearance (Λακωνικὸν δὲ οὐδὲν περὶ αὐτοὺς ἐφαίνετο). The sage successfully urged them to restore their original ways. In chapter 20 we learn about a young man who was possessed by a demon and started behaving in a very strange way, unbecoming a youth, but after Apollonius exorcized the demon, the man "returned to his own nature (IV 20)." In IV 16 we have a small reference to Proteus, one of the central gods in the *Vita*, because of his ability to take on all possible shapes. This small reference is imbedded in what is from a narrative perspective a very complex story¹⁷ (IV 11–16) of Apollonius' nightly visit to the tomb of Achilles (a highly Hecatan setting), his conversations with the spirit of Achilles,¹⁸ and more precisely, it is imbedded in the answer to the third "Homeric" question whether Helen had really come to Troy or whether the Greeks had been misled.¹⁹ The story of the

¹⁷ A short discussion in Knoles 1981:67–68.

¹⁸ Achilles is explicitly associated with Thessaly: he appears "with his cloak in the Thessalian fashion" (IV 16), talks of a Thessalian river and of the sacrificial neglect he had to suffer from his Thessalian compatriots. Perhaps this emphasis on Thessaly can also be linked to Hecate traditionally associated with Thessaly as "goddess of the moon and of the moon-conjuring witches of Thessaly" (Burkert 1985:171)

¹⁹ We must note that Philostratus seems to refer to the rationalist Herodotean ver-

plague in Ephesus (IV 10) caused by a demon who had taken the shape of a beggar accumulates references to false appearances, vanishing and shape shifting. Apollonius immediately saw through the disguise of the demon beggar when the sage miraculously appeared in Ephesus from Smyrna. Philostratus stresses that *this* appearance was not an illusion: “Thinking he should not delay the journey, and merely saying, ‘Let us go,’ he was in Ephesus, imitating, I suppose, Pythagoras’s famous act of being in Thurii and in Metapontum simultaneously.” When the beggar was stoned, “he had vanished, and instead there appeared a dog...” And the story ends with a reference to the demon as a phantom, a *phasma*. We must also remind ourselves that the famous story of the “resurrection” of the girl (IV 45)—already discussed for its reference to Artemis through the Alcestis-myth—specified that she only “appeared” (ἐδόκει) to have died: it was Apollonius who saw through the false appearance.²⁰ However, the most famous story of false appearances—also “the most famous of the stories about Apollonius”—is the story of the *empousalamia*.²¹ This can also be found in book IV: in the long chapter 25 we hear about Menippus of Lycia, who was about to marry a woman who (IV 25) “appeared (φαίνεται) to be beautiful and very refined, and claimed to be rich, but in fact she was none of these things at all: it was all a delusion (ἀλλὰ ἐδόκει πάντα). Menippus had been walking alone along the road to Cenchreae when a phantom (φάσμα) met him in the shape of a woman.” In Cenchreae there was a famous temple of Aphrodite, but the *phasma* appeared *on the road* to Cenchreae where—according to Pausanias—there is “on the road leading from the Isthmus to Cenchreae a temple and ancient wooden image of Artemis.”²² At the time of the wedding feast Apollonius started talking about the gardens of Tantalus

sion of Helen’s stay in Egypt and does not mention the version in which a *phasma* of Helen fooled both the Trojans and the Greeks: the latter tradition started with the *Palinody* of Stesichorus and is perhaps best known through the *Helen* of Euripides. Jones 2005:355 only gives the Herodotean reference, and rightfully so, but it is very likely that the rationalist tradition about Helen in Egypt would also conjure up the *phasma* explanation: this is perhaps why Bowie also includes this passage as an allusion to the *phasma* tradition in his contribution to this volume.

²⁰ Although Philostratus introduces the story as a miracle, a *thauma*, he stresses the rationalist explanation of an apparent death (see also *ibid.*: “Apollonius (...) woke the bride from her apparent death.”) more than the miraculous version, but he concludes that “the explanation of this has proved unfathomable.” This passage has been widely discussed as a possible parallel with some of the miracles by Jesus: see the contribution by Van Uytenghe for further discussion and references.

²¹ See Schirren 2005:218–220 for a reading of this story as a philosophical allegory.

²² Pausanias II, 2, 3; Loeb-translation by W.H.S. Jones:255.

“which exist and yet do not exist” (IV 25) and then revealed that the entire wedding banquet and all the silver and gold were not material but only had “the appearance of matter—οὐ γὰρ ὕλη ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ ὕλης δόξα.” Then everything started to vanish from sight.

Menippus was a philosopher who had been fooled by false appearances, by *phasmata* and *doxai*, and the theme is continued by Philostratus in the next chapter on Bassus of Corinth “who both seemed (ἐδόκει) and was believed to be a parricide (IV 26)” —which he probably was—but above all, who “falsely claimed wisdom”, the biggest offence of all, so to speak. Apollonius exposed him as a false philosopher and as a parricide, thus revealing the truth, as he always did. The following chapter brings us back to the criticism of the loss of identity of the Spartan ambassadors we mentioned earlier.

So book IV has a significant number of references to Artemis and the moon, combined with numerous stories about apparitions, false appearances and the loss of identity, all remedied by the insights and the truth speaking of Apollonius.

As we already mentioned, book V opens with a description of the most western parts of the world, the coastal area of Spain and the Atlantic Ocean. For people accustomed to the Mediterranean the tides of the Atlantic were a curious phenomenon, already studied by such natural scientists and philosophers as Posidonius (135–50 BCE). Philostratus gives us yet another demonstration of *paideia* by presenting Apollonius’ explanation of this phenomenon: “the Ocean is pushed by underwater exhalations coming from the many crevices that are situated both below and around the earth, and goes forward and retreats again as the breath-like exhalation dies away.” (V 2) Philostratus adds that Apollonius’ natural theory is corroborated by what “sick persons in the Gadeira regions” have noticed: “During the time when the waters are at their height, souls do not leave the dying, something which would not occur unless the exhalation was coming towards land.” (ibid.) In the next chapter Philostratus mentions that “the Islands of the Blessed lie at the extremity of Africa.” (V 3) The people living in the West are further associated with the end of the world, with the end of the day (V 3: “Day follows night and night day in the Celtic region, with the darkness and the light retreating gradually, as here, though around Gadeira and the Pillars they say the alteration strikes the eyes suddenly, like lightning.”) Most importantly, these people are also associated with the end of life. We have already quoted the Islands of the Blessed and the influence of the tides on the souls of the dying, but in chapter V 4 (still

on the same Loeb-page) we also learn that the inhabitants of Gadeira “have set up an altar of Old Age, and are the only people to celebrate Death.” In the next chapter (V 5) Philostratus reports on “Geryon’s trees” which “grow from the grave that holds Geryon.” This tree drips blood because it first sprang up from the blood spilt by Heracles during his tenth labour, the capturing of Geryon’s cattle. The trees growing from Geryon’s grave and the way they sprang up once again point to death, but Geryon is also a mythological double for Hades, as Geryon’s dog is a double for Cerberus. So in these first pages we find a high frequency of references to death and the after-world. It is, however, not Hades who constitutes the thematic unity of this book, but maybe Hades’ double, Geryon, provides the key to the central deity of book V: his only daughter, Erytheia, is not mentioned in person but her name is mentioned because she gave her name to the island on which Gadeira was built (V 4 and note 5): this Erytheia secured Geryon’s bloodline by bearing a child to the god Hermes.²³

The early chapters of book V refer to Hermes Psychopompus, but the range of this deity is very wide: he accompanies the dead to the next world, is the messenger of the gods, is the god of wisdom, identified with the Egyptian Thoth and, as Hermes Trismegistus,²⁴ he is a central figure in the religious and philosophical literature of the first centuries of the imperial era.²⁵ But Mercury is also the god of merchants, both honest and dishonest, of thieves and of liars. This explains why book V contains the discussion about Aesop and the importance of fable and “mythologia” for moral philosophy. In the introductory narrative, Philostratus makes sure to add that Aesop (V 15) “was once a shepherd, and was tending his flock near a sanctuary of Hermes, and being

²³ See Pausanias X, 17, 5 and René Bloch, s.v. “Erytheia” in *Der Neue Pauly* 4, 1998:106 for further references. The son of Erytheia and Hermes was called Norax: he founded a colony in Sardinia and a city called Nola.

²⁴ There does not seem to be a ring structure in this book unless we take the final references to the Egyptian wisdom as references to Hermes Trismegistus but there are no clear indications for this association.

²⁵ See of course Festugière 1944:14–25 and passim for the relationship between Pythagoreanism, Hermetism and other oriental wisdom-traditions; we must note however that Apollonius criticizes the rituals in the Serapeum (V 25) in Alexandria and that Philostratus did not include any highbrow conversations with Egyptian priests or sages: Apollonius is already their superior. Although the trip from Alexandria to Upper-Egypt is described as a pilgrimage (V 43), the Egyptian traditions are clearly not able to add anything to Apollonius’ wisdom. Once arrived in Ethiopia, it will become clear that the philosophical attitude of the Naked Ones is seriously flawed.

a lover of wisdom, he prayed the god to be given it.” Then comes the story of how Hermes distributed all the branches of wisdom: first came philosophy, then rhetoric, astronomy, music, epic poetry, iambic poetry and so on, but Hermes forgot to keep something for Aesop, so Aesop was given *mythologia*, the most Hermetic, so to speak, of all branches of wisdom because it combines being *philalèthès* with telling lies and making things up. Philostratus explains this gift to Aesop with a lovely story about baby Hermes being told bedtime stories about a talking cow (a story that by the way “inspired” baby Hermes to steal the cattle of Apollo).²⁶

Hermes is here called Hermes λόγιος καὶ κερδῶος, “lover of erudition and of profit” (V 15) and we find numerous other references to merchants, profit and riches in book V. It is also in this book that Apollonius travels to Egypt, the land of Thoth and Hermes Trismegistus, and on his way he is (finally)²⁷ initiated in the mysteries of Eleusis. As always, the sage encounters and remedies numerous characters that embody the negative aspects of this deity or whose views on morals and rituals are flawed. In chapter 20 we have the discussion with the ship’s captain, who was transporting statues of the gods to sell them as just another commodity. In V 22 Apollonius confronts a rich youth who does not possess the wisdom to make good use of his wealth. On the other hand, V 27 introduces the future emperor Vespasian as someone looking for wisdom, although in the imperial entourage Apollonius is confronted for the first time in our narrative with the lies, the hypocrisy and the lust for money of Euphrates.²⁸

We might even suspect that Philostratus inserted a few mischievous jokes in his narrative, by stretching the Hermes-theme all the way to incorporating references to messengers. Is it a coincidence or is Philostratus conspiring with the understanding reader when book V contains the only reference in the *Life* to the imperial postal services?²⁹ And another anecdote (V 24) combines two aspects of Hermes: the messenger of the gods and the god of thieves. In the story about the execution of the twelve robbers and the last-minute rescue of the one

²⁶ See the discussion by Gyselinck and Demoen in this volume.

²⁷ The passage (V 19) refers explicitly to the delay caused by the former hierophant in IV 18.

²⁸ Euphrates was mentioned earlier in I 13 and II 26 but only appears as a “dramatis persona” from V 27–28 onwards.

²⁹ V 8: “Some time later a man travelling by the express postal service arrived in Gadeira...”

innocent man who had been wrongfully convicted of robbery, this man was saved by a messenger on horseback.

Book VI has Ares as its main deity. In classical mythology as well as in Pythagorean theories, Ares is the exact opposite of Aphrodite, so it is not surprising that book VI, with its description of Ethiopia and the Naked Ones, is in some sense the mirror image of book III where the philosophers from India are described. Indeed, the two sections of the opening chapter of book VI contain a systematic comparison between India and Ethiopia, a parallel discussion of the River Indus with the Nile, the spices they produce, and the kind of people that live there. The second chapter criticizes the mentality of contemporary Greeks, their greed and selfishness and contains a quote from Hesiod, *Works and Days* 151 praising the time when *isotès*—equality—flourished and “the dark iron was hidden away (VI 2).” This is perhaps the clearest example of the allusive games Philostratus is playing in the opening chapters of his books, pointing the educated reader to the general themes of the individual books.³⁰ The theme here will be conflict and war, with Ares as their presiding deity. The quote from *Works and Days* comes from the passage on the age of the brazen race (143–155), the race of men dominated by Ares: “οἶσιν Ἄρης ἔργ’ ἔμελε σπονδόνετα καὶ ὕβριες” (145–146). War is present in its primary military meaning but the book also offers numerous examples of other forms of conflict, of “war” in its personal and intellectual meaning, where it can take many Protean forms such as philosophical confrontation, strife, slander, and so on.

The references to real war are quite numerous: the most conspicuous references here are to the Judean War (VI 29 and 34), but we also have discussions about the Peloponnesian war (VI 20), followed by the description of ritual customs preparing the Spartans for war and deterring their enemies (VI 20). The section about Titus describes the

³⁰ But at the same time Philostratus is playing a game of hide-and-seek, because in this context the quote seems to refer to some Golden Age as opposed to the current age of distrust and greed: cf. the rest of the sentence “It was indeed a good time when wealth was in dishonor, equality flourished, ‘dark iron was hidden away’ because mankind was united, and the whole world was considered one.” In Hesiod, the time of the brazen race is in no way described as a Golden Age, but as a time of unending conflict: the use of iron had perhaps not yet been developed and the history of mankind had not yet reached the common “iron” age, that much is correct, but Hesiod specifies that the brazen race simply used brazen weapons and was so fierce that they caused their own extinction: vv. 150–154. The allusive play in Philostratus and his strategies of diversion in the *Vita Apollonii* definitely deserve a more systematic study, but the reference to Ares is there.

capture of Jerusalem (VI 29): “Titus had now taken Jerusalem, and there were corpses everywhere.” Apollonius praises the emperor for not taking any credit for himself but assigning his victory to the *orgè* of the gods—probably a reference to the atheism of the Jews—and refusing to accept the crowns sent to him by the neighbouring provinces since he thought bloodshed never deserved a crown. A reference to the Trojan War could not be omitted, although it is a very small one, the painting by Polygnotus, *The Capture of the Citadel of Ilion* in Delphi (VI 11). In V 32 the murder of Titus by Domitian is announced, creating a link with the next books that will deal with the confrontation between Apollonius and Domitian. Apollonius is not a pacifist, he is in line with the classical Greek agonistic ethics. His final advice to Titus is “Surpass your enemies in arms, and your father in virtues.”

The thematic link between real war and moral or intellectual conflict is smoothed by the use of military similes for the different schools of philosophy: the Egyptian and Ethiopian philosophers should be compared to light infantry or sling bearers, whereas someone following the philosophy of the Indians is joining the ranks of the true hoplites, he is truly “in service” (στρατεύειν: VI 16; almost verbally repeated in VI 36).

Strife we encounter in the third chapter with the slightly altered³¹ Phaedra-motif of a stepmother estranging a father from his own son, Timasion, by “slandering him as an effeminate.” (VI 3) Strife, violence, and murder are also the theme of chapter VI 5 where Apollonius meets a man exiled for murder and in search of purification from the Naked Ones for the blood he once shed. Apollonius explains that the Naked Ones should have granted the purification, and “they should have crowned him even for premeditated murder” because the man had killed a descendant of “Thamus the Egyptian who had once ravaged the Naked Ones’ land.” The sage explains how the Naked Ones had once enraged Thamus by crossing him in his plans for a revolution in Memphis. Apollonius also reveals the way the man in search of expiation can be redeemed. In VI 7 we hear of Thrasybulus from Naucratis

³¹ Philostratus has inverted the attitude of “his Hippolytus” towards Aphrodite: instead of refusing to sacrifice to the goddess of love, Timasion answers Apollonius that he does so on a daily basis: “She is a goddess who I think has great power in the affairs of humans and gods.” (VI 3) We should add that in Pythagorean theory the harmony between Ares and Aphrodite is considered central for Harmonia, their child in classical mythology, and, as we said earlier, a central concept in Pythagoreanism from at least Philolaus onwards.

who was sent to the Naked Ones by Euphrates to slander Apollonius. From chapter 10 onwards we have the competition between Apollonius and the Naked Ones, and the haughty attempts of the Naked Ones to belittle the Indian sages, Greek wisdom and Greek religion, particularly the cult and oracles of Apollo. In his response Apollonius put the Naked Ones in their place, reminding them of the way they got expelled from India by the land itself,³² and rebuked them for slandering the Indian sages. (VI 11) Apollo is instead credited for the wisdom whereby he suggested to the Greeks how to avoid internal strife by focussing on external enemies, by suggesting to them that they capture the gold of the Lydians. The Naked Ones had even extolled their own ascetical way of life over the fairy-tale luxury (e.g. automata) and the miraculous gifts from nature the Indian philosophy is said to produce, linking this criticism with scorn for land of plenty tales in Greek tradition. The reply by Apollonius is double and Philostratus manages to combine the internal logic of the book with the overall design of the *Vita*. Apollo, the Greeks and the Indians possess the truer wisdom; the Naked Ones are motivated by hatred, envy and ignorant arrogance. On that level they can be said to be under the influence of Ares, but Apollonius adds: "Will you not then allow those who are totally possessed by philosophy to have the gifts that the earth yields to them spontaneously? Three-legged tables travel spontaneously around the banquets of the gods, and Ares for all his ignorance and malice (ἀμαθὴς περ ὧν καὶ ἐχθρός) never indicted Hephaestus on their account." (VI 11) The Naked Ones thus surpass the god of war in their irrational strife. Although Philostratus stresses that even the animosity between Ares and Hephaestus had its limits, any reference to this animosity is a reference to the famous passage describing the core of this conflict: the adulterous relationship of Aphrodite with Ares, and the crafty way Hephaestus captured the secret lovers (*Od.* 8.266–366).³³ So, on a number of levels, Philostratus develops both the internal theme of book VI and its connection with book III.

Creating our own narrative connection we could continue by saying that the mythological fruit of the relationship between Ares and Aphrodite was Harmonia. In this book the political expression of harmony (unity and justice) is an important theme, as it is throughout

³² Thus repeating the inversion-link between books III and VI.

³³ Philostratus will insert an explicit reference to this famous story in the next book: VII 26.6.

the *Vita*, but the Ares-theme dictates that references to unity must be counterbalanced by passages on war and dissent, remedied of course by Apollonius, as is the case in VI 34, the strife between the city of Tarsus and the emperor Titus. In this book reflections on justice are accompanied by *exempla* of injustice: the pirate-story, Palamedes, Socrates, Aristides, ... (VI 21).

The end of book VI reads as a partial ending and the last two books (VII and VIII) stand somewhat on their own, even starting with a new *exordium*. The beginning of book VII echoes the philosophical *synkri-seis* at the very beginning of the *Life*: the book starts with exempla of philosophers standing up against tyrants, and trying to overthrow them. The way Apollonius stood up against Domitian is compared with Zeno of Elea, with Plato, Crates and many others. The first four chapters are intended to prove that Apollonius surpassed most of these philosophers and at least equalled all political men who fought off tyranny, from the Greeks Harmodius and Aristogeiton, via the expedition against the "Thirty", and to the founding of the Roman Republic by Brutus. Here Philostratus reminds his readers that "they [the Romans] were originally a democracy after expelling their tyrannies by force of arms." (VII 4) This beginning once again sets the general theme, but here the general theme connects the two final books: Cronos being overthrown by Zeus. Cronos, the tyrant who ate his own children, was overthrown by Zeus, who established an eternal reign of justice. The latter will be the theme of the final book. In the beginning of the trial the accuser attacked Apollonius' neglect of the emperor Domitian but Apollonius did not even look at the self-declared *dominus et deus*: "His accuser attacked his neglect, and told him to keep his eyes 'on the god of all mankind'... Apollonius turned his eyes to the ceiling showing that he had his eyes on Zeus (VIII 4)."

Cronos is mentioned only once in the entire *Vita* and that one reference is precisely in book VII, chapter 26. The allusion is (once again) inverted: the imprisoned Apollonius calls upon the poets to sing "about Cronos, who was once imprisoned by the will of Zeus." The imprisonment of Cronos is compared in the next sentence with the way the adulterer Ares was bound by Hephaestus, so these are exempla of just punishments, incidentally connecting the unjust deities of books VII and VI. Next Apollonius starts to discuss cases of innocent people: "the many wise and blessed men whom a licentious citizenry imprisoned or a tyranny insulted." The book is filled with continuous references to tyranny, tyrants, murder, death, false accusations, unlawful

imprisonment, depression, and despair.³⁴ Although Apollonius remains confident and reassures his many interlocutors that the tyrant will be overcome, the book is darker than the previous one, and can be called a descent in Apollonius' confrontation with malice: as Cronos is even more gloomy than even Ares,³⁵ so it is said that Domitian is even more uncompromising than the god of war: "But now what *bel canto*, what lyre shall we sacrifice to? Everything is unmusical and full of malice, and the present ruler can be soothed neither by himself nor by others, though Pindar praises the lyre by saying that it soothes Ares's wrath, and restrains him from acts of war." (VII 12) It should come as no surprise that Domitian, the enemy of the Pythagorean sage, is impervious to that most Pythagorean therapy of the passions, music.³⁶ Domitian is not only worse than Ares, as Cronos he is also compared to the man-eating Cyclops. Apollonius then becomes Odysseus who "went into the Cyclop's cave without any previous knowledge of the giant's size, or food..." (VII 28) and was able to escape unharmed.

Here too, the final chapter of the book repeats its general theme: Apollonius and his interlocutor talk about fathers who destroyed their own children, as Cronos had tried to do. In VII 42 Apollonius meets a conspicuously good-looking youth from Messene, who was in jail because he had refused to become Domitian's lover. When the youth remarks that "nowadays the laws make death the reward for modesty" Apollonius answers: "So did the laws in the time of Theseus... since Hippolytus's own father destroyed him because of his modesty." "I too," replied the youth, "have been destroyed by my father." (VII 42)

Before we turn to the last book, we should turn back to the first two, since we started our analysis with the conspicuous ring structure in book III. In retrospect we have had references to Aphrodite, Artemis, Hermes, Ares, and Cronos. Zeus will dominate the last book as the god who deposed the tyrant Cronos and established an eternal reign of

³⁴ A complete list of references would be absurd and would almost amount to a "passim."

³⁵ This is the third of only three explicit references to Ares in the *Vita Apollonii*: the first had a clear function within the referential system of book VI, the two others both connect Cronos with Ares, book VII with book VI.

³⁶ See the description of the musical therapy in Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorica* 25, 110–111; see also *ibid.* 15, 66 for the beneficial effects of the Harmony of the Spheres on Pythagoras, the only person who is said to have been able to hear the cosmic music, and the way he tried to recreate this effect for others through musical instruments. See also Riedweg 2005:27–30 for an overview and further references.

justice. Books I and II have Gaia and Helios-Apollo as their thematic deities. Our final discussion will be on the general ring structure of the *Vita*, linking the opening chapters of the first book with the final passages of the last, the coming into the world with the departure of Apollonius from earth.

We believe we can be somewhat briefer in our discussion of the first books. Philostratus inserted his usual amount of allusions in the beginning of book II. The opening sentence of the Helios-book is "They set out from there in the summer." (II 1) There are numerous references to gold, the metal commonly associated with the sun,³⁷ in the first chapters. In the opening chapter we also learn that "the leading camel had a golden chain on its brow." In the next chapter a leopard is mentioned with a golden collar on which there was a dedication in golden letters "King Arsaces to the Nysian God." As they approached the Caucasus, Philostratus adds that this enormously long range of mountains runs all the way from central Asia to the borders of the Mediterranean, but he stresses that we should consider the more familiar Asia-Minor mountains, of which the height is "not very great", as "the end of the Caucasus, and not its beginning, as some say." So the mountains are not ascending from west to east, but descending from east to west. Now why would that make any difference to anyone? Probably because Philostratus, in the next sentence, describes the enormous height of the Asian mountains to conclude that "the passes of the Caucasus are so elevated that they say the sun grazes against them." (II 2: ὡς σχίζεσθαι περὶ αὐτὰς τὸν ἥλιον.) So not only do we have our first explicit reference to the sun, but we can also infer that the rays of the sun are offered a royal road to shine down from east to west, as philosophy and wisdom have come from east to west. The journey of our philosopher is thus "πρὸς ἔω" (II 6) in a double sense: both geographically and with regard to the origins of religious and philosophical wisdom.³⁸ The book ends with the kind of ring composition we have encountered before: in the final chapter (II 43) the party reaches the Hyphasis river, the description of which is taken up again in the beginning of book III. Here Apollonius and his companions find altars with an inscription by Alexander the Great: "To my father Ammon, my brother Heracles, Athena of Forethought,

³⁷ Bouché-Leclercq 1899:312–315.

³⁸ See Festugière 1944:19–44 "les prophètes de l'Orient" for the general context with numerous references to the *Life*.

Olympian Zeus, the Cabiri of Samothrace, the Sun of India, and Apollo of Delphi.”

The second book also seems to announce the importance of the heavenly bodies for the whole of the work. In II 5 Damis is challenged by Apollonius: “When you stand on so large and sacred a platform, you should express clearer notions about the heaven, the sun and the moon.” A little further on in that same chapter Anaxagoras and Thales are criticized because they had observed the heavenly bodies but published theories that proved they never attained genuine wisdom or understanding of their true nature. Anaxagoras was of course famous for his theory that the sun was simply “a mass of red-hot metal”, and Thales started the history of materialist philosophy and Greek science with his prediction of an eclipse in 585 BCE.³⁹

The book is filled with references to the sun, to Apollo and to Helios: in II 9 a disc of Indian silver is mentioned “with this inscription: ‘Dionysus the son of Semele and Zeus after his Indian victory to Apollo of Delphi.’” In Taxila Apollonius and his friends see an elephant called Ajax which had once fought with Porus against Alexander “and because it had fought valiantly Alexander dedicated it to Helios.” “It had” (of course) “golden bangles on its teeth or (if you prefer) tusks.” A Greek inscription ran “Alexander the son of Zeus dedicates Ajax to the Sun.” (II 12) The physical sun has left its mark on the inhabitants of India and their counterparts the Ethiopians (II 18): they are both black since they are “sunburned because the sun shines as it does in summer here even in winter.” The discussion on art and mimesis (II 22) contains a double reference to the sun: “For imitation: in order to reproduce dogs, horses, humans, ships, everything under the sun. (ὅποσα ὁρᾷ ὁ ἥλιος) In fact art sometimes represents the sun himself with his four horses, which is the way they say he appears in these regions; and sometimes again blazing in heaven.” On a meta-level, a discussion on the visual arts is well-placed in a book dedicated to Apollo. The elephant and the sun return in II 24: “They say there was also a shrine of the Sun, to whom Ajax the elephant had been consecrated, and statues of Alexander in gold... The walls of the shrine were of red stone that had a golden sheen, giving off a light like the sun’s rays.” Tigers are considered special creatures because they worship the sun: “immediately after birth

³⁹ Diogenes Laertius II, 8 (sun) and 8–9 for other “reductionist” theories on heavenly bodies; I, 23 for Thales.

it raises its front paws to the rising sun.” (II 28) Worship of the sun is mentioned all through the *Vita*,⁴⁰ but especially in this book: in II 26 when Phraotes makes a libation to the sun; in II 31 when oaths are taken by the sun; in II 32 we read about altars to the sun and, naturally, Apollonius worships the sun daily (II 38).

The first book has Gaia or Gè as its theme. A respectful relationship with the Earth is immediately connected with the core of the Pythagorean way of life. Once Apollonius had compared the available philosophical systems and decided to take up Pythagoreanism: “he refused the meat of animals as impure and dulling the mind, and lived off dried fruit and vegetables, saying that everything was pure which the earth produced unaided. (...) He made going barefoot his way of dressing up, and wore linen clothes, refusing those made from animals.” (I 8) The Pythagorean diet and dress are equally in harmony with mother nature: as the opening chapter of the *Life* records for the Master himself, Pythagoras of Samos “shunned clothing made from animal skins, and [he] abstained from all food or sacrifices of living creatures.” (I 1) In his discourse to Phraotes Apollonius will repeat the view that Pythagoreans only accepted the free gifts of nature for nourishment and protection: “It is not woven from sheep’s wool, but is unadulterated linen, which grows as the gift from unadulterated water and earth.” (I 32: ἀκηράτων φύεται ὕδατός τε καὶ γῆς δῶρα) This use of the wool of nature and this diet of the free gifts of Earth Pythagoras derived from the Indian sages⁴¹ who, as we have seen, were portrayed in their enchanted castle as men living in the most perfect harmony with nature: their perfect respect for Earth earned them a thousand fold reward.

The literary strategies we have already encountered in the other books are also to be found in the first: the philosophical link between a certain deity and the thematic field this deity stands for is combined with numerous innocent or philosophically meaningless references that

⁴⁰ Knoles 1981:241–242 has listed most.

⁴¹ See also Apollonius’ *Apology* VIII 7, 13–14 where the Pythagorean way of life is connected to the Indians, the Ethiopians and to Earth: “Everything Earth produces is for humanity’s sake, Majesty, and those who are willing to live at peace with animals have need of nothing. They can gather or reap, as the seasons dictate, from the nourishing earth. But some people, as if deaf to the earth, sharpen knives against animals for the sake of clothing or food. (...) Animals he [Pythagoras] regarded as sacred to Earth, but things that grow from Earth, he said, were pure, and so were fitted to nourish body and soul. Clothing made from dead creatures, which most people wear, he considered unclean...” The discussion of linen is taken up again in VIII 7, 16.

could help the reader in his interpretation. These references all have a function within the narrative of the book, in this case, the theme of world travel or, as Apollonius puts it, ἐμὴ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ (I 21). In the description of Daphne near Antioch reference is of course made to the transformation of Daphne, the daughter of a river-god pursued by the sun god, into a laurel tree, but it is also stressed that in Syrian Daphne it is earth who “yielded a slender cypress tree” (I 16: ἡ γῆ ἀνέδωκεν). I 20 discusses the confines of the earth and the earth as a connected system with the Euphrates disappearing in the earth and reappearing as the Nile. In I 33 Heracles is mentioned “limiting the earth at Gadeira.” In I 24 the harsh conditions in which the Eretrians live leads to a discussion of the soil. The chapter contrasts land that is inhospitable with fertile land that is considered “true soil” (ἡγοῦνται γῆν). In the famous dream vision the Eretrians had appeared to Apollonius as “fish [who] had been cast up from the sea and were gasping on land (ἐν τῇ γῇ), wailing like humans, and grieving at being exiled from their element.” Apollonius is the dolphin “swimming close to land” who will come to their rescue (I 23).⁴²

Apollonius is also confronted with people who have mistreated the earth in several ways. Not adopting the Pythagorean diet and dress can already be seen as a lack of respect, but book I also includes negative exempla of people who have shown true *hybris* towards the earth by cutting through peninsulae, draining rivers dry, and so on. The description of the palace decorations includes such examples: “The occupation of Athens is there, Thermopylae, and things even more typically Median: the rivers of the earth drained dry, a bridge over the sea, and the cutting of Athos” (I 25). These well known references to the outrageous behaviour of Xerxes can be doubled by the artificial structures described by Philostratus: “a Median woman who once ruled there spanned the river in a way that no river was spanned before” by blocking and rendering the river dry she made it possible to dig two fathoms deep into the bottom of the river and to construct from “stones, gravel, bitumen, everything that humans have devised as underwater sealants” an underwater tunnel “that was to emerge out of the earth, as it were, into the palaces on the

⁴² We also take this dream to be an allegory for the general condition of humanity or incarnated human souls, in which the dolphin also stands for Apollonius but now as the saviour god Proteus who came down to earth to rescue souls from their predicament by showing them the religious and philosophical “way home”. We will elaborate on this interpretation of Proteus towards the end of this paper.

banks.” (I 25: ὥσπερ ἐκ γῆς ἀναφάνοιτο) The palace itself also contains such “unnatural” constructions as “a domed roof imitating a kind of sky” in the hall “where the king sits in judgment.” (I 25) The Magi hung up four golden fetishes for the king as reminders of “Adrasteia and that he must not elevate himself above the human.” Of course, that is exactly what the predecessors of the wise king Vardanes had done. Apollonius explicitly disapproves of or completely ignores these constructions as he enters the capital and the palace, but these aspects of the description of “Babylon” and the lack of respect that previous Persian rulers had shown for the Earth can be read as parallels for the final conclusion on the Persian sages as “wise, but not in every respect.” (I 26)

In the final book, in the long *Apology*, Zeus and the highest god are referred to several times (VIII 7, 5.22.48), and in the narrative part of the book Apollonius visits Olympia and stays in the sanctuary of Zeus (VIII 15), receiving travelling funds from the priest of Zeus (VIII 17). The link between Zeus and his apotheosis in Crete we shall discuss later,⁴³ but at this point we shall limit the discussion of book VIII to a final, sophisticated allusion to Zeus deposing Cronos. In VIII 7, 47–48 Apollonius comments on his speeches given in Ionia on the Fates and Necessity: “so inexorable are the threads they spin that if they were to assign to someone a throne belonging to another, and the incumbent were to kill his rival in order never to be deposed by him, even so the dead man would come to life again so the decisions of the Fates might be fulfilled.” Apollonius then refers to three examples of fathers who had learnt that their children were to cause their downfall and tried to prevent this: “I referred to the fortunes of kings thinking of such as Acrisius, of course, of Laius, Astyages the Mede, and many others. These at first thought they had settled such problems, believing they had killed their sons or grandsons, and yet lost their thrones to them when Fate produced them from obscurity.” Next Apollonius reassures Domitian that he was *not* referring to the emperor here, *not* predicting that Domitian would lose his throne whatever he tried to do to prevent this. Only in the *irrealis*-case of flattery could these stories be taken to refer to Domitian: “If I were given to flattery, I would claim to have been thinking of your history (τὰ σὰ)...” Philostratus-Apollonius is playing a very ingenious game here of what one could call deceptive truth speaking. Apollonius had made references to fathers who had tried

⁴³ See also the contribution by Flinterman to this volume.

to eliminate their sons because it had been predicted to them that the sons would overthrow their fathers. More specifically, Apollonius had discussed mythological and historical examples of fathers who later found out that their sons were still alive and who did lose their thrones to their offspring. The sage denied that these could be taken to refer to Domitian, but *if* he had been talking about Domitian (which he denied) then only about the *young* Domitian in the role of the son, and about the older Vitellius in the role of the father who thought he could outwit the Fates. Of course, the reference *is* to Domitian: to the *old* Domitian, the tyrant compared to Cronos to be deposed by his son Zeus as the defender of justice. The quote from the *Iliad* 16.433 on Sarpedon and the Fates in this very passage is in our reading a deliberate hint that Zeus and Cronos *are* what Apollonius and Philostratus are talking about here: the quote is the first half verse of a speech by Zeus, who is here introduced by Homer, in verse 431 as “Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω.”

Before we discuss the way Philostratus has created an arch connecting the first chapters of the *Vita* with the final ones, we should reflect on the structure we have uncovered so far. We believe that we have shown that the eight books of the *Life* contain a significant amount of references to the following series of divinities.

1. Earth
2. Sun
3. Venus
4. Moon
5. Mercury
6. Mars
7. Saturn
8. Jupiter

These are of course the seven planetary deities and the Earth. In a sense, Philostratus has alluded to the importance of the planetary deities in Apollonius' life and in the *Life*: “Damis also says that Iarchas gave Apollonius seven rings, named from the planets (τῶν ἐπὶ ἀπὸνύμους ἁστέρων), and that he wore them in succession according to the name of each day.” (III 41) According to Philostratus, Damis was not allowed to be present during the “secret discussions” Apollonius conducted with Iarchas, “in which they considered astral prophecy, discussed prediction, and treated sacrifices and the appellations pleasing to the gods. From this source, he says, Apollonius derived his four books on

planetary prophecy (περὶ μαντείας ἀστέρων), a work also mentioned by Moeragenes.” As has been observed by Flinterman, Anderson and others,⁴⁴ Philostratus seems to distance himself from this work, even from its very existence. Of Apollonius’ work *On Sacrifices* he has found many copies, but not of the one on astrology, and unless Philostratus is being deliberately deceptive in his communication here, he at least suggests that he too never owned or even saw a copy of it. Furthermore, he is very ambiguous about the attainability—for humans at least—of its subject, astral foreknowledge. “I myself believe that astral and similar prophecy is beyond the scope of human nature, and I do not know if anyone owns the work” (III 41). Anderson stresses that the reader is left in doubt about what Philostratus actually meant by this, since there are two possible meanings: “that the work did not exist because its subject was itself impossible, or that Apollonius was indeed superhuman to have written about it.”⁴⁵ The topic of astrology was of course a dangerous one for an author trying to free his subject from the reputation of being a γόης, although, as Schirren has pointed out,⁴⁶ stressing the superhuman nature of Apollonius was a more effective defence strategy than denying or rationalising every miraculous aspect of his *bios*. However, even if we conclude that Philostratus meant to say that the superhuman Apollonius did write such a work, a sequence of planetary deities as master-structure of the *Life* seems at odds with the reticent, ambiguous or perhaps even negative attitude of its author towards astrology. So we are left with the question of why Philostratus would have chosen the planetary deities as structural elements for the *Life*. From the information given by Philostratus or any other source it is impossible to assess what the astrological interests or teachings of Apollonius amounted to, although it is probable that Apollonius had both, since Philostratus felt obliged to mention them at least. It

⁴⁴ Flinterman 1995:76–77: “Without denying that Apollonius took an interest in astrology, the author of the *VA* is at pains to drop the subject as soon as possible (3.41). This was apparently an aspect of the sage of Tyana which he encountered in his sources and found hard to reconcile with his own norms and values.” See also Anderson 1986:149, note 10: “He is similarly non-committal on astronomy/astrology.” Robiano 1994:292–293 for references on the historicity-authenticity of this work.

⁴⁵ Anderson 1986:142.

⁴⁶ Schirren 2005:49 with reference to the paradox that Apollonius is identified with Proteus the arch-sophist and arch-sorcerer: “Wenn Proteus der Erzzauberer war, dann ist Apollonius ein göttlicher Zauberer; d.h., der Erzähler kann ihn als γόης auftreten lassen, aber zugleich immer die göttliche Natur hervorheben, so dass er vom Vorwurf des niederen Goëtentums frei bleibt.”

would therefore be too hypothetical and too noncommittal to link the structure of the planetary deities to Apollonius himself. There are some indications of an interest in astrology at the court of the Severi and in the so-called *salon* of Julia Domna,⁴⁷ so Philostratus might have been influenced by his patroness rather than by his subject. Thirdly, as we shall see, there were other Pythagorean authors of the Imperial period who combined the teachings of Pythagoras with a journey of the soul through the seven planetary spheres. So there are a number of possible external reasons why Philostratus could have chosen the planetary deities as structural elements, but if we confine our analysis to the way Philostratus approached this structure as the only possible way to understand his own view on the planetary deities we must conclude that he accommodated astrological teachings with his own world-view. In a sense, he both included and bypassed the issue of astrology: as we shall try to show, the meaning of the Philostratean planetary sequence is not astrological but rather symbolical and moral.

Philostratus managed to link all these books, creating a four-fold symmetry within this master-structure. The “inner” books IV and V, with the Moon and Mercury as their thematic deities, had false appearances as their common link and Philostratus created a close connection between the final chapters of IV and the opening chapters of V. The Moon and Mercury are also the two heavenly bodies closest to Earth. Books III and VI, Venus and Mars, are opposites in mythology and in the way Philostratus used them in his description of Indians and Ethiopians: Philostratus adopted numerous literary strategies to underline their status as mirror images. The planets are also mirror images from an astronomical point of view: they are the two planets directly “under”

⁴⁷ See Barton 1994:205: “Severus built the most famous of the buildings known as Septizonia, which displayed the seven planets prominently.” But see also Levick 2007:131–132 with further references for doubts about this interpretation of the Palatine Septizonium. Spielvogel 2006:124 characterizes the emperor as “eine so auf Sterndeutung und Vorzeichen fixierte Person wie Septimius Severus.” Ibid. and Levick 2007:29 for discussions of the story in the *Historia Augusta*, Severus 3, 9 that he married Julia Domna because of her horoscope: “Cum amissa uxore aliam vellet ducere, genituras sponsarum requirebat, ipse quoque matheseos peritissimus, et cum audisset esse in Syria quandam, quae id geniturae haberet, ut regii ungeretur, eandem uxorem petit, Iuliam scilicet.” The mention of “geometricians and philosophers” in Julia’s circle by Philostratus (VS 622) has been taken to refer to astrologers—“mathematici”, but Flinterman 1995:22–23 (with further references) has argued that this points rather to the importance of mathematics in Platonist and Pythagorean philosophy. Flinterman is closely followed by Levick 2007:117–118.

and “above” the sun in the standard astronomical system of the time. The heavenly bodies of II and VII are opposites because they are the hottest and the coldest, but they are connected, since Saturn was often called “the star/planet of Helios” or “the sun of the night”.⁴⁸ The thematic opposition of the eponymous deity of Apollonius and the characterization of his worst enemy as Cronos are equally clear. The first and the last book are linked by the association of the highest god with the sphere of the fixed stars:⁴⁹ the first and the last books are dedicated to Earth and Jupiter because they tell of Apollonius’ incarnation and ascension.

In Gnosticism and Hermetism the soul’s journey through the planetary spheres was well established before Philostratus.⁵⁰ And in the Neopythagorean philosophy of Numenius of Apamea we have a very explicit link between the cycle of incarnation of souls and their descent and ascent through the seven planetary spheres. In the long fragment 31 Numenius offers an allegorical exegesis of the description of the Cave of the Nymphs and its two Gates (*Od.* 13.103–112): this is a detailed account of how the souls descend from and ascend to the sphere of the fixed stars through the planetary spheres, combined with the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and with the Solstices. In this system the various aspects of the souls are seen as accretions taken up or deposited again during the descent and the ascent of the soul through the different planetary spheres.⁵¹ Although this is a clear example of how Pythagoreanism, prior to Philostratus, combined the immortality of the soul with astrology and the system of the planetary spheres, it offers nothing more than a thematic parallel.

We take the differences with what Philostratus has created in the *Life* to be much more significant. First of all, the sequence of planets suggested by the sequence of the books can not be found anywhere else. Antiquity had known numerous astronomical systems with different theories on the relative positions of the heavenly bodies. Plato (*Timaeus* 38 c–d) still proposed a system in which the moon was placed in the first circle above the earth, with the sun occupying the second. Then

⁴⁸ Cumont 2000:44–45 for references.

⁴⁹ Cumont 1922:106: the highest heaven is “Jupiter’s citadel” with further references.

⁵⁰ See C. Colpe, “Die Himmelsreise der Seele innerhalb und ausserhalb der Gnosis.” In: Ugo Bianchi (ed.), *The Origins of Gnosticism*. Colloquium of Messina 1966. Leiden, 1967:429–447.

⁵¹ Leemans 1937:58–64 for discussion; in his numbering fragment 31 is edited as testimonium 42. See also De Ley 1972 for a discussion of the theories of the soul’s journey in Numenius, Porphyry and Macrobius.

came the orbits of Hermes and “the Morning Star”. Although they are not specified in this dialogue, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were the outer planets in the Platonic system too.⁵² The Pythagorean system of Philolaus with ten bodies, including the central fire and a counter-earth, has the wrong number of heavenly bodies to “fit” the *Vita*, and never survived the criticism of Aristotle and later scientists, and even if we “delete” the central fire and the counter-earth, its sequence of Moon, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn is not what we have in the *Life*.⁵³ The common system, ascribed to Pythagoras and also called the “ratio Chaldaeorum”⁵⁴ had the following sequence: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Clearly, none of these systems correspond to the sequence we find in the *Vita Apollonii*. Although the *Life* (III 41) mentioned that Apollonius wore the seven rings symbolizing the seven planets “according to the name of each day” (III 41: πρὸς τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν ἡμέρων), nonetheless the sequence of books does not reflect the order of the days of the week.⁵⁵ We would like to propose the following explanation: what we have in the *Vita* is neither a physical sequence of planets nor a system referring to any literal “physical” ascent or descent of the soul through the planetary spheres; what we are confronted with is an allegorical or symbolical sequence. We know of comparable symbolical systems, e.g. in the Mithraic mysteries, where the different grades of initiation also referred to planets without reference to their perceived astronomical position,⁵⁶ but the system of Philostratus is—to our knowledge—unique.

The general framework of the book is the descent of Apollonius to this world and his ascension from earth back to the divine realm, ἐς οὐρανόν, as the miraculous girl choir sings during his ascension (VIII 30).⁵⁷ This means that books I and VIII, referring to Earth and to Jupiter

⁵² Wright 1995:24–26 and 46–48 for further references.

⁵³ Wright 1995:21.

⁵⁴ Röscher 1965:2530.

⁵⁵ Röscher 1965:2535–2540.

⁵⁶ Barton 1994:199 and Beck 2006:114; the seven stages of Mithraic initiation linked to the planets (Crow=Mercury, etc.) gives the sequence of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Moon, Sun and Saturn; the κλίμαξ ἐπτάπυλος leading to an eighth gate mentioned for the Mithraic mysteries by Celsus (apud Origenem, *Contra Celsum* VI 22) combined the planets with metals and gave yet another sequence: Saturn, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Moon, Sun.

⁵⁷ Miles 2005a:59–60 has pointed to the ambiguities concerning the ontological status of Apollonius and to the ring structure Philostratus created by his three versions of Apollonius’ birth and of his departure from earthly life: “The section on birth stories

as the highest god and the god of the highest heaven, are the alpha and the omega of the soul's journey. If the last book has the double function of referring both to a planetary deity in the sequence of spheres and to the highest sphere of the fixed stars, we are left with a sequence of six planetary deities comprised within the two frame books. These six divine heavenly bodies are the Sun, Venus, the Moon, Mercury, Mars and Saturn. These six can be divided into three pairs: we have seen that the Moon and Mercury, Mars and Saturn were closely connected by Philostratus, leaving the Sun and Venus as the first couple. Philostratus clearly used these deities to structure his books but he used them as metonymies for certain moral qualities and deficiencies: Apollonius is always the sage who not only corrects the rituals in the many sanctuaries he visited, but who also tries to remedy people's moral behaviour. It is precisely this combination of ritual and ethics that makes him into a true Pythagorean. If the main function of the planetary deities within the narrative of the *Life* is moral, then we should look for the moral qualities associated with these planets. Now in Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* I, 5 "On beneficent and maleficent planets" we have such a list of the general ἦθος or moral character of the heavenly bodies within an astrological framework. The "character" of the planets (and their astrological influence) was defined by their "physical" qualities (hot-cold; dry-moist) or rather loosely based upon their mythical character and their "behaviour" in the skies,⁵⁸ so it should come as no surprise that Mars and Saturn were seen as mostly malevolent. The Moon with its phases and Mercury with its seemingly erratic behaviour and its rapidly changing positions in relation to the sun, were thought ever changing and therefore "morally" unreliable or at least ambiguous. Venus is always benevolent.⁵⁹ The Sun, according to Ptolemy was also ambiguous, but it does not seem exaggerated to assume that a work celebrating Helios in the way the *Vita Apollonii* does, would correct this into a benevolent character.

contained one human and two divine options, and so do the chapters on his death. Apollonius described himself as son of Apollonius, but was said to be the son of Zeus Horkios by the Tyaneans (I 6) and an incarnation of Proteus by his mother (I 4). The stories of his death present a similar pattern. He is said to have died in Ephesus, or to have disappeared in Lindus or ascended in Crete. The possibility of a divine nature is given greater emphasis, both in the birth and the death legends. Nonetheless, the possibility of a purely human status is left open. Likewise, despite the many comments regarding Apollonius' nature made by other characters, it is ultimately left ambiguous."

⁵⁸ Cumont 2000:104–105.

⁵⁹ So is Jupiter according to Ptolemy, and so he is in the master-structure of the *Life* but we are not considering him within this discussion of the six planet frame.

With this minor adaptation we can come up with a moral sequence of planets: the journey of Apollonius is not the equivalent or the evocation of a real, “physical” journey of the soul through the spheres of the planets, it is a moral journey allegorically expressed by the astrological system of his days. His “journey” is both a descent and an ascent: in the first two books he comes into contact with the more benevolent gods, the Sun and Venus, perfecting his religious and philosophical world view; in the Moon- and Mercury-books he is confronted with ambiguity, with an increasing number of people and situations that are in need of correction; and in the last two books of the planetary sequence the confrontation becomes ever more intense as he is facing outright enemies who want to ruin his reputation and even take his life, but the journey ends with his triumph over Cronos-Domitian and his miraculous departure from earthly life. His ascension towards the highest heaven is set in the Jupiter-book, the god who established an eternal reign of justice after a period of tyranny and who is the god of the sphere of the fixed stars, of astral immortality. This life and this *Life* can therefore be taken as an exemplum, as a philosophical message for the reader, which implies that the *Vita Apollonii* is not as superficial, superstitious or otherworldly as the *Forschung* has repeatedly claimed: it uses the astrological system of its day but turns it into an allegory that praises a correct observance of religious traditions and upholds an ideal of moral struggle against opposing forces. It is thus well rooted within the agonistic ethics of classical Greece. It is highly Pythagorean, not only on its surface reading but even in its literary communication because Philostratus has managed to convey this message in a way that is in accordance with the Pythagorean refusal to reveal its deepest truths to anyone but the initiated.⁶⁰ It is in accordance with the poetics of the Second Sophistic because the “initiated” are reduced to the cultural elite who alone possess the *paideia* to understand all the levels of the Philostratean discourse.

⁶⁰ On the importance of silence and “withheld interpretations” in numerous passages (often on the interpretation of religious issues), forcing the reader to make his own interpretations, see the contribution by Miles to this volume, and the chapter in Miles 2005a:97–101. We must add that Miles presents this as a purely literary strategy and would not agree with the link to Pythagoreanism since he agrees with most scholars on the unphilosophical position of Philostratus: “Given the identity of the text’s protagonist, there is rather less Pythagoreanism than might be expected,” *ibid.* quoting Jones 2005:11: “Philostratus is not much concerned with Apollonius the Pythagorean philosopher.”

Our analysis of what Philostratus achieved in the *Vita Apollonii* would not be complete without some final remarks on the overarching ring structure in the work. Philostratus chose earth as the central theme of his first book. This book contains the miraculous story of the birth of Apollonius, of the incarnation of the god Proteus. The Forschung has focused on the reputation of Proteus as a sophist or even as a sorcerer,⁶¹ as one κρείττων τοῦ ἀλῶναι (I 4), and has been focusing on references in classical literary authors. Proteus can also be read as a programmatic figure for the literary technique adopted by Philostratus and as an instruction for the reader on how to read the work.⁶² However, it is revealing for the way Philostratus and the *Vita Apollonii* have been approached that Neopythagorean interpretations of the Proteus figure have been overlooked. Even if it is true that Philostratus does not present himself as a Pythagorean enthusiast in either the *Vita Apollonii* or in any of his other works,⁶³ it seems likely that his *paideia* as a professional writer would extend to the Pythagorean and general allegorical tradition. In the various traditions offering allegorical interpretations of Homer Proteus was also seen as a symbol for matter. Heraclitus, the compiler of the *Homeric Allegories*, explains the various shapes Proteus takes on in the *Odyssey* as references to the four elements: the lion represents fire, the tree air, the dragon earth and water simply water. Proteus is considered an allegory for the creation or shaping of the world.⁶⁴ Furthermore, Pythagorean number symbolism as we know it from such works as the *Theologumena arithmeticae* ascribed to Nicomachus of Gerasa

⁶¹ Herter 1957:967; Flinterman 1995:52–53; Fuhrer 2004:11–12.

⁶² Miles 2005a:11–12 discusses Proteus as a programmatic figure and a literary topos for the “changing patterns of characterisation by allusion.” Apollonius will be characterized by allusions to various historical and mythic figures as *poikilos* as Alexander, Dionysos, Odysseus, Pythagoras and Socrates. The Proteus birth story is therefore “an instruction for the reader on how to interpret what follows.” We also thank Graeme Miles for sharing his find that Nonnus of Panopolis, in the proem to the *Dionysiaca* (I, 13–33), explicitly used the shape shifter Proteus as a programmatic figure for the diversity of his epic (I, 14–15): στήσατέ μοι Πρωτῆα πολύτροπον, ὄφρα φανείη ποικίλον εἶδος ἔχων, ὅτι ποικίλον ὕμνον ἀράσσω. See Robert Shorrock, *The Challenge of Epic. Allusive engagement in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus*. Mnemosyne Supplements 210. Leiden, Boston & Köln, 2001:20–22.

⁶³ Bowie 1978:1666 with reference to Speyer 1974:50: “Speyer justly remarks that Philostratus’ other writings give no hint of enthusiasm for Neo-Pythagoreans or Apollonius.” And *ibid.*:1672: “no great enthusiasm for Neo-Pythagoreans.” See also Jones 2005:11 quoted *supra*.

⁶⁴ Heraclitus *Allegoricus* 64–67, pp. 69–72. Buffière would assign the text to the first century of our era (pp. IX–X).

and to Iamblichus interprets Proteus as the monad which gives rise to everything: "Calling the monad 'Proteus,' as they do, is not implausible, since he was the demigod in Egypt who could assume any form and contained the properties of everything, as the monad is the factor of each number." The monad is also called matter in this system: "There is a certain plausibility in their calling it 'matter' and even 'receptable of all,' since it is productive even of the dyad (which is matter, strictly speaking) and since it is capable of containing all principles."⁶⁵ Proteus is the Pythagorean monad, the One, containing in itself all other numbers, even and uneven, because by systematically adding "one" to any other number, you "create" the entire series of whole numbers. So, the monad contains in itself all numbers, as Proteus contains in himself all elements. He "contains the properties of all things just as the monad contains the combined energies of all the numbers."⁶⁶ The interpretation of Proteus as matter in several traditions and as the Monad in the Pythagorean tradition might be an additional reason why Philostratus chose to identify Apollonius with Proteus and to present this incarnation in the first book dedicated to Earth.⁶⁷

This allusive use of Pythagorean arithmetical theology probably proves that Philostratus took a similar attitude towards number symbolism as towards astrology: he acknowledged that it was part of the Pythagorean tradition but refused to incorporate it in his own work as more than a symbolic system. His approach to Apollonius and to Pythagoreanism is first and foremost moral. The criticism of the Indian sages of a dogmatic belief in numbers can probably be read as his own opinion on this matter: "Seeing that the Wise Men numbered eighteen, he next asked Iarchas why they were that many, since it was not the square of four, or one of the respected and honoured numbers, like ten, twelve, sixteen, and so

⁶⁵ Pseudo-Iamblichus, *Theologoumena Arithmeticae* 7; translation from *The Theology of Arithmetic* attributed to Iamblichus: *The theology of arithmetic: on the mystical, mathematical and cosmological symbolism of the first ten numbers*. Translated from the Greek by Robin Waterfield; with a foreword by Keith Critchlow. Grand Rapids (Mich.), 1996:40 and 39. See also Delatte 1915:137–164: "une série nouvelle d'Epitheta Deorum d'après les Théologouména de Nicomaque."

⁶⁶ Herter 1957:969; Lamberton 1986:37.

⁶⁷ Number symbolism does not offer an explanation for the sequence of books and planetary deities either: although in Pythagorean number-symbolism Helios-Apollo "is" the number 1, Aphrodite 2, and Artemis even 3, this only fits the sequence of three planetary gods, does not fit with their absolute positions in the *Life* and cannot explain the sequence of the remaining books.

on. In reply the Indian said: 'We are not slaves of number, or number of us, but our honour comes from wisdom and virtue.'" (III 30)

In our view Philostratus added his own Protean allegory. We must remember the context of the Proteus-passage in the *Odyssey*. Menelaus was stranded in Egypt because he had neglected to make the proper sacrifices to the gods, who now withheld favourable winds (*Od.* 4.351–352). Proteus' daughter, Eidothea, revealed to Menelaus that her father would be able to tell him which of the gods had taken offence and what rites or sacrifices the king of Sparta should perform to get back home. So, the basic function of Proteus was to reveal the rites and to show him the way home (*Od.* 388–390):

τόν γ' εἴ πως σὺ δύναιο λοχησάμενος λελαβέσθαι
ὅς κέν τοι εἴπησιν ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου
νόστον θ', ὥς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσσαι ἰχθυόοντα.

If you could somehow lie in wait and catch him,
He will tell you your way and the measure of your path,
And of your return, how you may go over the fish-filled sea.⁶⁸

This is exactly what Apollonius did for humanity: to reveal to them the proper attitude towards the gods and show them their *nostos*, their way home. In the allegorical interpretation of Homer, the entire *Odyssey* was taken as an image of man's journey through matter to immortality. Philostratus was simply being slightly more original than age-old tradition when he took not Odysseus, but Menelaus as an allegorical figure for mankind's journey home. In the Pythagorean sense, this way home meant obtaining astral immortality by escaping the cycle of incarnations. The proper attitude towards the gods had the double meaning of performing the proper rituals and adopting a morally exemplary life. That is what Apollonius taught and in that sense Apollonius *was* Proteus. But although Apollonius-Proteus comes *to* the world, he is not *of* the world. Earth is not his real home, as was expressed by Eunapius when he remarked that Philostratus should have given his biography the title of *The sojourning of a god among men*.⁶⁹ Proteus was ideally suited to express this liminality:⁷⁰ he is a sea-god who only visits the

⁶⁸ Loeb-translation by A.T. Murray, revised by G.E. Dimock:147.

⁶⁹ Eunapius, *Vitae Sophistarum* 454; or as Wilmer Cave Wright translated for the Loeb series, p. 347: "The visit of God to Mankind."

⁷⁰ There are a number of stories which also stress this liminality: in his nativity story the bolt of lightning "which seemed just about to strike the earth, hung poised in the air and then disappeared upwards." (I 6) The dream about the Eretrians (I 23) as fish

land from time to time, and can only be forced to give his oracular advice when he is on land. The ruses (λοχησόμενος) needed to capture Proteus and to force the oracles from him can even function as images for the aporrhetic character of Pythagorean philosophy, emphasized in the first chapter of the *Life*.⁷¹ We might even take Proteus and the aporrhetic Pythagorean philosophy as symbola for the elusive literary strategy adopted by Philostratus in this work.

This sea-god who can only be forced by ruse to give oracular advice on the *nostos* of men when he is to be found on land, is said in the last chapters of the *Life* to have disappeared from earth in the temple of Dictynna-Britomartis. We can refer the reader to the thorough contribution in this same volume by Jaap-Jan Flinterman on this sanctuary, on the goddess, her link with Zeus, and on the final chapters of the *Vita*, but we would like to add our own interpretation from the perspective of the general structure of the work. Dictynna was a nymph, a land-goddess who, according to Callimachus (*Dian.* 193–194), escaped from the tyrant Minos by jumping into the sea. Her link with Zeus, her escape from the clutches of a tyrant are obvious links with the themes of the final book, but that Apollonius-Proteus/Philostratus chose the sanctuary of this particular goddess for a return to heaven can also be linked to the beginning of the work, to its general allegory and to Pythagorean philosophy. One of the Pythagorean *akousmata* asked “What are the Isles of the Blessed?” and answered: “The Sun and the Moon.”⁷² If the heavenly bodies are islands then the heavens are the sea. Apollonius is identified with a sea god who came to earth. In the beginning of the *Life* Philostratus explicitly called upon the reader to “bear Proteus in mind, especially when the course of my story shows that my hero had the greater prescience of the two, and rose above many difficult and baffling situations just when he was cornered (I 4).” Apollonius-Proteus departed from earth in the sanctuary of a land nymph who was granted the status of a goddess after jumping into the sea. This is the final mirror

on land calling out for help to Apollonius, compared to a dolphin, swimming close to the shoreline, we have already mentioned as a possible reference to the liminal status of Apollonius and his function as someone who has come to save our souls.

⁷¹ I 1: “Hence they practiced silence on celestial subjects (ὕπὲρ τοῦ θεοῦ), having heard many sacred secrets (πολλὰ γὰρ θεῖά τε καὶ ἀπόρρητα) which it would have been difficult to keep, except that they had learned that even silence is a form of discourse.”

⁷² Delatte 1915:274–276.

image employed by Philostratus to give an overarching ring structure to the *Life of Apollonius*.

Philostratus did something quite unique in the *Vita Apollonii*.⁷³ He wrote a highly sophisticated literary work that functions on different levels simultaneously: it is a remarkable piece of literary entertainment but it is also a work that should be taken very seriously both in the history of philosophy and in the history of literary technique. Only by carefully studying its literary sophistication can we realize that Philostratus added a religious and philosophical level to this work: to the reader familiar with the allegorical reading of the poets it conveyed an additional message, one that taught them how to live their lives here and to obtain immortality over there. Philostratus turned the *Life* of a *theios aner* into a literary masterpiece and into a celebration of the religious and philosophical traditions of Antiquity. In doing so he revealed himself as a *theios sophistes*.

⁷³ We thank Graeme Miles for suggesting one possible parallel, be it a later one: Viktor Stegemann, *Astrologie und Universalgeschichte. Studien zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos von Panopolis*. Stoicheia. Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Weltbildes und der Griechischen Wissenschaft, begründet von Franz Boll, Heft IX. Leipzig und Berlin, 1930 has proposed a much discussed astrological interpretation of this epic, but the literary strategies used by Nonnus are quite different from what Philostratus has created. See also the recent study of Shorrock, *supra* note 62.

THE PHILOSTRATEAN APOLLONIUS AS A TEACHER

ERKKI KOSKENNIEMI

Introduction

Apollonius of Tyana has played a major role in New Testament exegesis, where he has traditionally been compared to Jesus. Unlike most New Testament scholars I have considered Apollonius as he is presented in the *Vita Apollonii Tyanensis* to be mainly a product of Philostratus.¹ In my book *Der philostratische Apollonius* (1991) my aim has been to apply the redaction-critical method developed in the New Testament exegesis on Philostratus' work.² Although some elements of the method, which are used to investigate, for example, the Gospel of Luke, do not fit the VA, I consider it *mutatis mutandis* useful.

This article deals with Apollonius of Tyana as a teacher in the VA.³ According to Philostratus, he received his education in Tarsus and Aegae. Although it is no longer possible to uncritically use Philostratus' work, it is certainly interesting to ask how Philostratus presents his hero as teacher. If we use the redaction critical method, it means that we should ask certain questions.⁴ First of all, we should look for the literary conventions Philostratus may have followed when writing about a famous man. Secondly, we should compare the VA with the non-Philostratean

¹ Dzielska is a severe judge of the work: "Moreover, I consider this material useful and historically valuable only when it finds its confirmation in other literary and historical sources" (Dzielska 1986:15). For a view with markedly more confidence in this source, see Reimer 2002:19–23. Francis 1998:419–441 has justly emphasised that a fictive work can be a serious work.

² My second book, *Apollonios von Tyana in der neutestamentlichen Exegese: Forschungsbericht und Weiterführung der Diskussion* (1994) investigates how Apollonius has been used in the New Testament exegesis.

³ Investigation of ancient education is an important part of classical studies. The long and multifaceted history of education in Antiquity is well investigated. The still valuable, classic work of Henri Marrou (*Histoire de l'éducation dans l'Antiquité*, 4th ed. 1958), has been updated and completed by Teresa Morgan's *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (1998). On education in ancient Rome, see Stanley E. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (1977). On Greek education, see also Townsend 1992:312–317; Christes 1996:110–114.

⁴ See Koskenniemi 1991:27–30.

tradition, i.e. with Apollonius' letters and the scarce mentions of him, but also with what we may know of the works of Moeragenes and Maximus of Aegae—the work of Damis is Philostratus' own invention and never existed.⁵ Thirdly, we have extensive works written by Philostratus⁶ and they certainly help us to understand the picture of Apollonius. Finally, we should ask about the historical context of Apollonius' and Philostratus' times and the situation in which the writer lived. All this should help us to understand the final redaction of the VA.⁷

It is not easy to determine the way in which the concept of “teacher” should be defined in the work. Of course, Apollonius has his own faithful disciple, Damis, and later others, whose teacher he is in a narrow sense, i.e. he gives them part of their formal education. On the other hand, he clearly teaches others, such as rulers, who are or are not willing to be taught. Moreover, with large crowds in temples and cities he acts as a teacher in a broader sense, either preaching or acting in a manner in which his words are intimately interwoven with his deeds. In this article, I will take a look at both the narrow and the wider aspects, and ask who is taught, how Apollonius teaches and what is taught? However, it is useful to start with a look at how Apollonius gained his ability to teach.

⁵ Admittedly, we cannot exclude the possibility that somebody had forged the book of Damis before Philostratus; however, if that is true, Philostratus certainly was aware of this, and probably was able to produce the “reliable” source himself. The arguments are collected in Koskenniemi 1991:9–15; updated in 2005:75. Flinterman still argues for the view that a pseudonymous source really existed (1995:232). According to Francis (1998:427–429) both the writer and his readers were aware that Damis was the invention of the writer.

⁶ It is commonly held that the “second” Philostratus, a man at the court of Severus, wrote almost all the texts of the *corpus Philostrateum* and certainly the most important ones, the *Vita Apollonii Tyanensis*, the *Vitae sophistarum* and the *Letters*; see Schmid 1897:1–11; followed, e.g., by Solmsen (1941:124–135) and Schönberger (1968:10–16). On the question, see Flinterman (1995:5–14) and de Lannoy's review article (1997:2412–2413). Münscher, a prominent scholar of the *Corpus Philostrateum*, attributed *Heroicus* and *Imagines II* to the “third” Philostratus (1915:1–231 and 1907:467–558.). Gerth (1956:764–765) and Kalinka (1968:10–16) follow his view. Yet according to Anderson, it is not possible to say who wrote *Nero*, *Imagines I*, *Gymnasticus* and *Heroicus* (1986:241–253; 268; 272), but according to Beschornier (1999) the final answer is the “second” Philostratus.

⁷ An example of a work on the *Vita Apollonii*, which largely overlooks the aspects emphasised in this methodology, is Petzke's *Die Traditionen über Apollonius von Tyana und das Neue Testament* (1970). It offers much valuable and accurately collected data, but fails to connect it with Philostratus' works and with literary models, which greatly diminishes its value and endangers the main results.

From Pupil to Teacher

Philostratus tells us briefly about Apollonius' own education. He had an excellent memory and advanced rapidly; moreover, he did not speak the local dialect but Attic. At the age of 14 his father brought him to Tarsus, where a Phoenician rhetorician named Euthydemus taught him. Tarsus was, however, a poor place for the young star, and he moved to Aegae with his teacher. In Aegae, Apollonius lived in Asclepius' temple and learned philosophy with Platonics, "Chrysippeans" and Peripatetics, but also with Epicureans (I 7). The Pythagorean philosophy, however, started to attract him very soon, not because but in spite of his Pythagorean teacher Euxenus, who had learned the philosophy like a parrot able to repeat some sentences. That was the reason why Apollonius, although amiably and gently, left his teacher and started to follow the Pythagorean way without a teacher. This included the traditional period of silence (I 14–15).

It is interesting that Philostratus does not describe Apollonius' early education at all⁸ and that the account of his later studies is very short indeed. The short description, however, makes it easy to identify several traditional features.

That great men were assumed to have great talent in their early years is commonplace in the classical world. Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrHist* 90.6) and Suetonius (*Augustus* 8.1) tell this about Augustus; Diogenes Laertius (10.14) about Epicurus, Eunapius about Porphyrius (455–456) and Josephus, *semper talis*, about himself (*Life* 9).⁹

It is also clear that Philostratus' Apollonius did not owe his wisdom to any Greek teacher. Euthydemus and Euxenus are minor names and play a very small role. In this sense Apollonius meets the ideal of being αὐτοδίδακτος, as Epicurus was according to Sextus Empiricus (*Adversus mathematicos* 3) and Sabinus Valerius according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Antiquitates Romanae* 5.12).¹⁰ Although the word is not used, the ideal occurs in Philo, whose Moses learned everything through ἀνάμνησις (*Vita Mosis* 1.23–24). In *Ep. Apoll.* 2, Apollonius mentions the classical methods to acquire virtue (φύσις, μάθησις,

⁸ On typical early education, see Marrou 1958:210–242.

⁹ See Bieler 1935:34–35.

¹⁰ See also Posidonius *FGrH* IIa, fragment 108k, Ps.-Callisthenes 1.13.5 and esp. Suda s.v. αὐτάρκτηα.

χρῆσις),¹¹ but the Philostratean hero does not need to go the hard way in VA: Apollonius learns everything easily. Philo, obviously influenced by Greek ideals, tells that Moses had several teachers, Greeks as well as Egyptians and Chaldeans, but he did not need their help (*Vita Mosis* 1.23–24).¹² Josephus proudly tells how he had visited all major Jewish schools before he made his own decision (*Life* 7–12). Philostratus' Apollonius is thus a typical young hero of classical antiquity.

Historically, it might be significant that Philostratus does not tell more about Apollonius' education. Dzielska doubts whether Apollonius ever was a famous sophist and orator as described by Philostratus.¹³ At any rate, he does not stand in the succession of famous sophists well known to the writer of VA, who would certainly have named them if possible.

The most important part of Apollonius' education is his travels to the East. He could speak all the languages (VA I 19) (but is often in need of an interpreter, for example in II 26) and Arabs even taught him the language of animals (I 20).¹⁴ He consults with the *magoi* of Babylon, who were considered wise but not in all matters (I 26); Philostratus voices reservations on their wisdom also at VS 1.494. In contrast to his attitude to the Magi, Apollonius is clearly a pupil of the Indian Brahmins (VA III 11–49, esp. III 16). On returning to Greece he becomes a sovereign teacher of the Hellenes (book IV), and his sojourn with the Ethiopians proves that the man had no longer anything to learn (VI 6–23); this is made clear in a meeting between two philosophers, Apollonius and Thespesion, the leader of the gymnosophists, when Apollonius' answer to Thespesion results in the young Nilus changing sides (VI 10–12). This conversation is also an example of a competition between rhetoricians: Apollonius, who spoke Attic and was able to write his testament in Ionic dialect (VII 35), was a superb speaker.

Foreign philosophers appealed to the Greeks at least from the time of Alexander,¹⁵ and especially from the second and first centuries BCE, eastern countries, and India in particular, were described as nations of philosophers: the second and third centuries CE are considered the

¹¹ On the triad, see Penella 1979a:90–91, and Borgen 1997:69–70.

¹² On Moses' education, see my article (in press).

¹³ Dzielska 1986:52–53.

¹⁴ On the topos, present also in Appian fr. 19, see Schwemer 1995:136–138.

¹⁵ On Jews as a people of philosophers, see Hengel 1991:59–60.

climax of this development.¹⁶ Philostratus thus stood in a long tradition of holding up exotic wise men as ideals, when he had the Indian Sages confirm that Apollonius was the greatest of all Greek philosophers. Of course, the Indian philosophers, masters in the Greek language and rhetoric, deal with typical Greek problems instead of oriental doctrines and teach Greek cosmology and mythology. That they were masters in the Greek language (III 36) is part of Philostratus' intention to emphasise Greek culture (see below).

Who is taught and where?

Philostratus tells that Apollonius had pupils who followed him, but does not tell exactly how they were gathered. The pupils are mentioned briefly in I 16: Apollonius would talk with the gods early in the morning, then with his pupils, and only then with others. He meets Damis (I 19), who follows him to India and is often the only pupil mentioned (II 5; II 7; II 11; II 24; II 22). Ten young Athenians intended to set sail to meet him in Ionia when they met him in Piraeus (IV 17). His group of pupils, easily recognized by the *τρίβων* similar to their teacher (IV 20; IV 39–40; VII 14), numbers 34 when Apollonius reaches Rome during Nero's tyranny, but is reduced to eight (IV 37): Philostratus now mentions the names of Damis, Menippus and Dioscorides (Demetrius¹⁷ is mentioned in IV 25 and often in books 7 and 8). The entire group follows Apollonius to the far west (IV 47). Only the ten best pupils follow him to the Ethiopian gymnosophists, while 20 less prepared left the journey aside (V 43). Apollonius was considered a teacher by all good philosophers, such as Dio (*διδάσκαλος*, V 38). The core of the followers consisted of Damis and Demetrius (see esp. VIII 10–15). In the final chapter of the VA Philostratus mentions the group of pupils after Apollonius had left the world (VIII 31).

Apollonius' pupils appear sometimes in the collection of letters (*Ep. Apoll.* 42, 43, 77, 85, 92–93) and there is no reason to doubt that he actually was a teacher in a narrow sense, especially because Lucian's Alexander was in contact with one of his pupils (*Alex.* 5). However, names are not mentioned at all in this tradition, and the knowledge we

¹⁶ See Hengel 1991:212.

¹⁷ On the problems involved in the way Philostratus presents Demetrius, see Bowie 1978:1657–1659.

have is very scarce. Some New Testament scholars have claimed that Apollonius and Jesus initiated a largely similar process of tradition,¹⁸ but in order to prove this, they should start with establishing the existence of an Apollonian school after his death. Petzke speaks about some traits of the tradition belonging to the beginning and about others belonging to “ein bereits fortgeschrittenes Stadium der Apolloniusverehrung”.¹⁹ However, the sources hardly allow such a reconstruction. Although Apollonius’ pupils are sometimes mentioned, they cannot be compared to early Christianity. According to Lactantius, who admittedly is not a neutral source, no one honoured Apollonius as they did Christ (*Divinae Institutiones* 5.3). A school similar to Jesus’ followers or a process similar to early Christian tradition are not attested in the sources.

Not surprisingly, Philostratus does not mention the costs of education, which were high on this level. It is clear that his hero, as a man preaching ascetic ideals, would not require money from his pupils. However, there is a parallel in Apollonius’ letters, where he adamantly claims that he would never take money for his philosophy, even if he were in need of it (*Ep. Apoll.* 42).

Apollonius not only teaches his pupils, but also appears before large crowds and starts his work already in his youth. In most cases he teaches in temples (I 8): he converted the temple in Aegae into a Lyceum and Academy (I 16). He teaches priests in temples and acts as a religious reformer (I 9–10; I 16; IV 2; IV 19; IV 40–41). But his work is not limited to temples, and after returning from India he teaches in Ionia (IV 1–8), Athens (IV 18–22), Sparta (IV 31–33) and Rome (IV 39–41). His letters to Greek cities is so central a theme that Philostratus mentions it in the introduction (I 2).

That Apollonius taught publicly seems not to be a mere Philostratean invention: Apollonius’ letters often tell that he was in contact with several cities, including Caesarea (*Ep. Apoll.* 11), Seleucia (12–13), Ephesus (32; 65–67), Miletus (33; 68) Sardes (38; 50; 71–76), Sparta (63–64), Tralleis (69), Sais (71) and with the inhabitants of Ionia (71). Dzielska analyses the traditions of Apollonius’ activity in different cities and doubts that he ever taught publicly. In her opinion Apollonius was famous for his magic, not for his teaching.²⁰ However, she seems to

¹⁸ See especially Petzke 1970:147–153.

¹⁹ Petzke 1970:148.

²⁰ Dzielska 1986:51–84.

pose the question as a false dichotomy: these two reasons for his fame do not exclude each other. At any rate, Philostratus makes Apollonius resemble Lucian's Proteus Peregrinus, although the latter is a caricature. A connection to Asclepius' temple may well explain Apollonius' reputation as a magician (see below). There is no reason to deny that he indeed taught publicly.²¹

The most characteristic feature of Apollonius as a teacher, however, is that he teaches powerful men. The servants of tyrants do not frighten him, but they receive a lesson (VA I 21). Phraotes, the philosopher-king of Babylon, is his pupil (see esp. III 31). Like Indian philosophers, who were feared by everyone (III 10), Apollonius gives a good lesson to an anonymous king (III 28–42). Vespasian sought his help immediately after he arrived in Alexandria, and humbly asked Apollonius to make him a king (ποίησόν με βασιλέα, V 28) to teach him (καὶ ὅποσα χρὴ τὸν ἀγαθὸν βασιλέα πράττειν διδάσκει, V 36) and to follow him (V 36). According to Vespasian, Apollonius was εὐεργέτης of the family (VI 29–30), and Apollonius allegedly appointed Demetrius as Titus' teacher (VI 33). Domitian, too, receives a lesson from him, but a very different one (books 7–8), and Nerva still asks him to be his helper (VIII 27).

Of all the features of the Philostratean Apollonius, his closeness to men of power seems to be the easiest to explain.²² Few scholars would consider this feature as historically reliable:²³ the Philostratean Apollonius would have been politically the mightiest man in the first century Mediterranean world. But, apart from the letters "quoted" by Philostratus, the non-Philostratean tradition tells markedly less about this activity. Admittedly, Apollonius writes to Domitian (*Ep. Apoll.* 20–21) and the collection contains an approving letter from Claudius (*Ep. Apoll.* 53).²⁴ However, the picture Philostratus draws is essentially different from the one found in the *Letters*. On the one hand, he had a long tradition to follow: Apollonius was not the first philosopher who came into conflict with men of power. Philostratus himself refers to such philosophers (VA VII 1–2), making it clear, however, that Apollonius was superior to them all (VII 3–4). On the other hand, we have to take

²¹ See Bowie 1978:1640.

²² See Koskeniemi, 1991:31–44 and Flinterman's work (1995).

²³ See, however, Jackson 1984:25–32.

²⁴ On the problems involved in the letter written by Claudius (*Ep. Apoll.* 53), see Koskeniemi 1991:35.

his own works into account, especially the *Vitae sophistarum*, where he often emphasises the role of philosophers (e.g. Leon of Byzantium VS 1.485, Dio of Prusa VS 1.488, Favorinus VS 1.489 and Antiphon of Rhamnus VS 1.500). Above all, Philostratus evaluates the Roman rulers in the VA exactly as he does in his other works.²⁵ Apparently the Philostratean Apollonius played a role similar to what Philostratus imagined for himself at the court of the Severi. He would have been delighted with a world in which philosophers did not stand up when rulers stepped in and where rulers felt fortunate if they received a nod from a philosopher (VA III 27).

How does Apollonius teach?

Apollonius very often teaches people through discussing with them, asking questions and giving answers. The first question is mostly asked either by Apollonius (as in VA II 22: ὦ Δάμι, ἔστι τι γραφικὴ; or V 14: ἔστι τι μυθολογία;), or by another teacher, such as Thespesion (VI 10; VI 20), and only seldom by a pupil (see, however, II 7).

Another interesting feature is that the teacher's question is often succeeded by a series of questions. Apollonius teaches Damis in this manner (for example, II 5; II 11; II 22), but also others (for example, V 20; V 21; V 22; V 23), and his interlocutor is often led to aporia (II 22; V 22). Usually, the series of questions ends with Apollonius' final instruction on the theme. The *Vita Apollonii* here obviously reflects philosophical teaching as Philostratus knew it. Philostratus refers to such conversations often, as in the following passages, where ἐρωτᾶν is clearly a fixed term.²⁶

Of course, Philostratus follows here once again a strong literary tradition: asking questions and leading the fellow to aporia had been common since Socrates. But Philostratus is not merely looking to the past.

²⁵ See Koskenniemi 1991:38–40. On the rupture with Vespasian (V 41), apparently problematic to Philostratus and perhaps a pre-Philostratean tradition, see Koskenniemi 1991:36.

²⁶ Ὡς δὲ ἐκάθισεν “ἐρώτα,” ἔφη “ὅ τι βούλει, παρ’ ἀνδρας γὰρ ἡκεις πάντα εἰδόμενος.” (III 18); Ὡς δὲ ἀφίκετο, ξυνιζήσαντες, ὥσπερ εἰώθεσαν, ξυνεχώρουν τῷ Ἀπολλωνίῳ ἐρωτᾶν, ... (III 34); Ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ Δάμις τοὺς μὲν διέβαλλε τῶν λόγων, τοὺς δὲ ὑπετέμνετο, τοὺς δὲ οὐ ξυνεχώρει ἐρωτᾶν, ... (IV 15); “Ἐρώτα,” ἔφασαν “ἔπεται γὰρ πού ἐρωτήσῃ λόγος.” (VI 19); ..., οὕτω παρεῖχε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σοφίαν τοῖς ἐρώσι, περὶ παντὸς ἐρωτᾶν ξυγχωρῶν (VIII 21).

Epictetus' *Diatribai* reflect the same methods: many conversations begin with a question (as 1.11; 1.13; 1.14), and ἐρωτᾶν, ἐρώτημα and ἐρώτησις seem to be used in similar manner as in Philostratus. Epictetus uses the words ἐρωτᾶν—ἀποκρίνειν, ἀποκρίνεσθαι/ἐρώτησις—ἀπόκρισις especially in 1.7.1–4, and they seem to be fixed terms. Although the mutual asking of questions may have been a common way to teach all over the world, Philostratus apparently describes here philosophical instruction as he knows it in his own day.

The philosophers of the classical period could sit down with their friends and enjoy theoretic speculation. A well known feature of the Hellenistic schools is that practical life replaced speculations; this is especially true in Philostratus' work. Apollonius used to link his practical instruction with what he occasionally saw in everyday life (VI 3) but, more importantly, his words were interwoven with deeds, as noted by Philostratus in V 21. In this sense, all his actions, including his miraculous deeds, such as exorcism (IV 20), his appearance in a strife-torn city during his silent period (I 15) and especially his opposition against Domitian (books 7–8), were part of his mission as a teacher. A philosopher who did not pursue ascetic ideals was not a philosopher, and if he avoided the open controversy with tyrants, he had betrayed his doctrine (esp. VII 11–15). An integral part of Apollonius' instruction was his mission to meet powerful men without fearing the power of tyrants. A negative example of a teacher whose deeds were not in accordance with his wisdom is Philolaus, who feared Nero (IV 36–37).

It is not surprising that Philostratus, the learned sophist, makes his Apollonius teach through his speeches, thus affirming his hero as a master of rhetoric. His great apology, which was not publicly held but only written (VIII 7), is a Philostratean product. However, this speech, as well as the great rhetorical competitions with Dio and Euphrates (V 32–37) and Thespesion (VI 10–11) are of value in reflecting the ideals of the Second Sophistic. Philostratus formulates his atticising ideals in the VS (1.503): they are largely similar to what he attributes to Apollonius (VA I 17). Apollonius' manner of teaching is analogous with that of Polemo of Laodicea (VS 1.503): both spoke ὥσπερ ἐκ τρίποδος. Probably most of his contemporary readers realized better than some modern scholars how it was possible that he could restore Apollonius' rhetorical masterpieces, although Damis' memoirs were a rather clumsy work (VA I 4).

What does Apollonius teach?

When the content of Apollonius' teaching is investigated, several important areas can be discerned. Philostratus presents Apollonius as a religious reformer, who often lives in temples teaching priests and others. However, the content of his message is by no means clear in VA.²⁷ He recommends that people visit several shrines (IV 40) and his prayer is very simple (ὦ θεοί, δοίητέ μοι τὰ ὀφειλόμενα, IV 40). Taught by Iarchas (III 11), he occasionally corrects traditional myths, either by giving a new and better version of the myth (III 11; VI 15–16),²⁸ or by rejecting the myths of the poets altogether. He sharply denies that men and gods can have sexual union (VI 40),²⁹ recommends Aesopus' fables instead of myths (V 14–15), criticises the man who sold statues of gods (V 20) and says that the images of the gods were produced by φαντασία rather than by μίμησις (VI 19). The discussions with Iarchas, in which Apollonius obviously has the status of a pupil, result in a book on sacrifices (III 41), which Philostratus claims to have known.

The investigation of the rest of Philostratus' works explains satisfactorily why Apollonius' message is unclear in VA. Religion does not play a major role in his other writings.³⁰ It is probable that Apollonius had a reputation as a religious teacher in the pre-Philostratean tradition, or actually two different reputations. Part of the tradition presents him as a teacher in temples, even a man considering all sacrifices as obsolete: this view was apparent above all in Περὶ Θυσιῶν³¹ and in the letters 26 and 27.³² Another part presented him as a magician, with either a positive or a negative connotation: this view was present above all in Lucian (*Alexander* 5), in Apollonius' letters 16 and 17 and in Moeragenes' work.³³ Philostratus does not make it easy to determine which of the

²⁷ Sometimes these versions are given also elsewhere in Philostratus' works, as in *Heroicus* 33; 43.1–6, which is similar to VA III 22. Petzke analyses the religious themes on which Apollonius teaches (1970:196–218). Unfortunately, he fails to compare them with Philostratus' other works.

²⁸ Philostratus has Herodes strongly criticise traditional myths in VS 2.554.

²⁹ Philostratus, who expresses a similar view in *Heroicus* 25.10 and has Onomarchus of Andros criticise a man who fell in love with a statue (VS 2.598–599), does not mind that he himself happens to have presented Apollonius as the son of Zeus (VA I 6).

³⁰ See Koskenniemi 1991:74–76.

³¹ On the fragment, see Koskenniemi 1991:74.

³² Dzielska considers this reputation historically reliable (1986:146–151).

³³ Scholars disagree on the question whether Moeragenes' work was meant to be positive or negative towards Apollonius. According to Bowie, the work was written

two reputations was the original one: as a writer without any deeper religiosity he included both, making it problematic for anyone wishing to know which of the two was older. I have elsewhere suggested a tentative solution, which could explain both: perhaps the religious teacher who started his career teaching in temples was later at odds with established cults and was banned from shrines. This may explain the dual reputation of Apollonius.³⁴ Alternatively, these contradictions in Philostratus' work might be explained by the fact that religion was not a major concern in his writing.

Perhaps the most important part of Apollonius' public teaching is his political activity. In this area he never contradicts himself: he wishes to influence the development of good government and co-operation between citizens (IV 3; IV 8) and, above all, ascetic ideals. Apollonius is an influential teacher of cities,³⁵ emperors and would-be emperors, and he uses several methods to push his political agenda. He has private conversations with men of power (V 32), teaches them in rhetorical debates (V 32–37), writes to rulers (for example, V 21; VI 29) and meets tyrants publicly, without fear (esp. books VII–VIII). He rejects the democracy recommended by Euphrates (V 33) and the freedom of choice recommended by Dio (V 34) and calls for a sort of enlightened monarchy (V 35–36). He recommends cautiousness to a monarch, who should not offend people with his philosophy (II 37) and understands well that the prefect Aelianus does not kill the tyrant because he fears the gods (VII 18). The role of Apollonius is undoubtedly what Philostratus himself hoped for at the court of the Severi. He was able to write against sycophants and tyrants in a letter to Caracalla after the murder of Geta, but apparently he was not able to express these aloud to the emperor.³⁶ The Philostratean Apollonius obviously says what the writer himself wanted to say. According to Philostratus, a tyrant exists to test a philosopher (VII 1; see also VII 11–14). Yet the writer himself failed such a test in his own age.

with a positive intention (1978:1673), which is accepted by Dzielska (1986:85–127) but doubted by Anderson (1986:299–300). At any rate, the letters 16 and 17 take the decisive word μάγος positively, which strongly supports Bowie's view.

³⁴ Koskeniemi 2006:80–82.

³⁵ Lollianus of Ephesus acted as στρατηγὸς ἐπὶ τὰ ὄπλα in Athens, as Philostratus himself did, and the writer tells that food-supplies belonged to this office (VS 1.526). It is hardly a coincidence that Apollonius deals with this topic.

³⁶ On *Ep.* 72, see Koskeniemi 1991:39.

A further characteristic part of Apollonius' instruction is his ascetic ideal,³⁷ which he preaches from the stairs of the temple in Ephesus (VA IV 2). He restores the old asceticism in Olympia (IV 27, IV 31) and rejects horse-racing when speaking in a temple in Alexandria (V 26). A good ruler follows these ascetic ideals: Nero does not, and Vindex justly condemned him (V 9); Vespasian (V 29), Titus (VI 30) and especially Nerva (VIII 27) and Phraotes (II 26) follow good ideals. And of course, Apollonius himself is a model for everyone, rejecting gifts offered by monarchs (I 33–35) and seeking a simple life.

Although it is easy to find connections with Philostratus' own works,³⁸ the ascetic ideals of Apollonius are hardly a Philostratean invention. The epistles of Apollonius present a public preacher, *castigator morum*, who castigates people for seeking luxury and money (*Ep. Apoll.* 3–8), for gluttony (*Ep. Apoll.* 29 and 35) and several other vices (for example, *Ep. Apoll.* 32–38). His ascetic reputation was apparently pre-Philostratean. Perhaps Lucian's words, characterizing Proteus Peregrinus, are worth quoting: "As soon as Peregrinus had come to Italy he started to criticize everyone, especially the Emperor, who was wise enough to let a walking philosopher talk" (*De morte Peregrini* 18).

These ascetic ideals concur partly with national or conservative ideals: Apollonius hates the Ephesian practice of taking "barbaric" names such as Lucullus or Fabricius (IV 5) or of holding gladiator shows in Athens (IV 22) and persuades a young Spartan man to abandon his sailors' life (IV 32). The Greek language—Apollonius spoke Attic from his youth and not a local dialect (I 7)—and the glorious past of Greece are a matter of pride to Apollonius. All great figures of the work, such as Phraotes (II 25–41) and the Indian sages (III 36), speak excellent Greek, and people not able to do so—the anonymous king (II 23; III 30), a young man teaching birds to talk but neglecting his own speech (VI 36) or the people in Gadeira who had never seen a Greek drama (V 8)—are presented in a rather negative light (cf. the depiction of Peregrinus Proteus and his terrible Greek, *VS* 2.564). The Spartans of the past, especially Leonidas and his men (VA IV 23; VI 26; VIII 7), the Athenians of Salamis (III 31–32) and the Eretrians (I 24) and Greeks of the past in general (III 28–42) were still a valuable example

³⁷ On these ideals, see Petzke 1970:218–219.

³⁸ See Bowie 1978:1668–1670.

for everyone in Apollonius' time, and he called on the Greeks to follow in their footsteps (for example, IV 21–22).

The importance of Greek culture and history to mankind in general is strongly emphasised in Philostratus' works.³⁹ However, this is not at all alien to the collection of the letters. Apollonius, ἀνὴρ Ἑλλήν τὴν φύσιν (*Ep. Apoll.* 66) writes critically to Sparta (*Ep. Apoll.* 61–63), to Athens (70) and to the Ionians (68; 71). Greek traditions are very important to him (*Ep. Apoll.* 8.1; 25–26; 33–34). Although the Philostratean Apollonius may be very critical towards his fellow Hellenes, the epistles are even more bitter in their criticism. Perhaps this was a pre-Philostratean element (Bowie attributes the trait to Moeragenes),⁴⁰ which suited the intention of the writer extremely well; however, it is all too understandable that the Philostratean hero does not attack his own brother for taking a Roman name like “Lucretius or Luperus” (*Ep. Apoll.* 72).

Apollonius often mentions great Greek philosophers, as does Philostratus in his introductory chapters. The most important of them, of course, is Pythagoras (I 1–2), but Socrates and several others are mentioned as well. It is a hopeless task to find a consistent philosophical line which could be attributed to the historical Apollonius: the Pythagorean doctrine on the soul is admittedly strongly present (esp. σῶμα σῆμα in VII 26 and Apollonius' previous incarnation, III 15, III 23–25), but the old monism lives in harmony with the old dualism (III 34), and of course, for Indian philosophers, one must know oneself before one can know others (III 18). Iarchas, the main authority in the work, teaches traditional Greek cosmology, to which several philosophical schools have contributed (III 34–37). A prominent theme is righteousness, which is dealt with in III 24–25 and VI 21.

The definitely Pythagorean traits of the work are, however, not enough to convince Dzielska that Apollonius was indeed a Pythagorean. She points to several missing elements of the Neopythagorean philosophy: speculations on the First Principle, on the Demiurge, the Monad and the Dyad.⁴¹ Yet, Philostratus does not show enthusiasm for Pythagoras in his other writings, so that this characteristic of his hero can hardly be a Philostratean invention.⁴² It seems easy to explain why Apollonius

³⁹ See Koskeniemi 1991:51–54.

⁴⁰ Bowie 1978:1672.

⁴¹ Dzielska 1986:143.

⁴² Bowie 1978:1672. On Apollonius' philosophy, see also Anderson 1986:136–137.

is not a consistent Pythagorean in VA. The work belongs to the period in which Diogenes Laertius collected all good philosophers in one work: all wisdom was now considered common property. On the other hand, Apollonius himself mentions Pythagoras very often in his letters (*Ep. Apoll.* 16; 23; 48.2; 50; 52; 53; 55.1; 62) and follows typically Pythagorean doctrines, such as avoiding meat (*Ep. Apoll.* 8.2) and wearing linen (8.1). He is perhaps justly linked to the Pythagorean tradition, but it is not easy to define the exact nature of his philosophical position, since Philostratus, the main source available to us, hopelessly merged all philosophies in his works.

Finally, the *Life of Apollonius* is remarkable for its numerous geographic and zoological passages, often of a paradoxographic nature (VI 50–58).⁴³ A first glance at the work already shows that Philostratus does not hide his own interest in these topics. Although he often lets Apollonius, Damis or Iarchas relate all the miraculous things a traveler can meet on his way to the East, West or South (as in II 18–19, III 2–9, III 45–58, V 5, V 42), he also tells on his own initiative about several interesting things in III 1–2, V 1 and VI 1. The rise of paradoxographic literature is a well known feature of the early imperial period,⁴⁴ although paradoxographic passages had been common since Herodotus (see, for example, 4.2.7–10) and especially after Alexander the Great. Philostratus' interest in animals and how they can teach human beings is concordant with the instruction of Apollonius, who obviously is his mask here also (II 11–16). The topos of using animals as an ideal model for human beings was common among philosophers in the early imperial period. Musonius Rufus uses birds, who do not abandon their children, as models for human parents (Stobaeus 4.52), and many Christian writers, such as Basil the Great (*Hexaemeron* 8.6 SC 26.460) and Ambrose (*Hexaemeron* 5.18.61), followed in his footsteps.

It was not my intention to write a dogmatics of Apollonius' teaching in VA: Petzke's book offers material for anyone wanting to analyse some of his teaching. With this article, I hope to have shown that the hero of the *Vita Apollonii* is a very interesting figure also as a teacher—and a thoroughly Philostratan man.

⁴³ A φασίν-source suggested by Petzke, allegedly containing an itinerary used by Philostratus (Petzke 1970:149), has never been accepted by later scholars. According to Anderson, who believes that Philostratus indeed used a source when writing on Apollonius in the East, this very formula shows that Philostratus uses his literary skill to embellish the journey (1986:161–162).

⁴⁴ See van Groningen 1965:51–52.

LA VIE D'APOLLONIUS DE TYANE ET LE DISCOURS HAGIOGRAPHIQUE¹

MARC VAN UYTFANGHE

Lors d'un colloque en 1995, Peter Brown me fit une confidence révélatrice : il en était venu à se passionner pour l'histoire de l'Antiquité, me dit-il, à cause de Ponce-Pilate. Il n'aurait pu choisir, me semblait-il alors, symbole plus pertinent pour emblématiser sa démarche intellectuelle et scientifique (d'où est sortie la carrière brillante que l'on sait), car ce procureur de la Judée, homme plutôt cruel si l'on en croit Flavius Josèphe, est devenu malgré lui le Romain le plus cité de tous les temps, du seul fait de la mention de son nom dans le Credo de la messe : *sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est*.

Le lecteur aura déjà compris le sens de mon souvenir. Les spécialistes de Philostrate et de sa *Vita Apollonii* ne doivent pas se faire d'illusions. Si ce texte, et la figure même de son héros, ont tellement occupé les esprits, depuis l'Antiquité tardive même (Origène, Hiérocès et son « réfutateur » Eusèbe [?], et sans doute déjà Porphyre, voire Celse),² c'est effectivement *non tantum propter Apollonium, sed propter Iesum*.³

Faut-il donc lire l'ouvrage de Philostrate, comme on l'a souvent fait, en fonction du christianisme ? Soit en disant que le Nouveau Testament s'enracine dans le même humus religieux hellénistique que la tradition préphilostrateenne relative à Apollonius (avec notamment le concept de θεῖος ἀνὴρ).⁴ Soit, au contraire, en affirmant que Philostrate lui-même, longtemps avant Hiérocès, s'est servi des Évangiles (et des Actes des apôtres), ou du moins de certains récits néotestamentaires qu'il connaissait d'une manière ou d'une autre, voire qu'il a voulu, selon le

¹ Je dédie ma contribution à ce volume à mon collègue et ami Martin Heinzelmann de l'*Institut Historique Allemand* de Paris, à l'occasion de son 65^{ème} anniversaire.

² Cf. Origène, *Contra Celsum*, VI 41 ; Eusèbe (ou pseudo-Eusèbe selon certains), *Contra Hieroclem*, 2. Sur la possibilité d'un Apollonius rival du Christ chez Porphyre, voir Lagrange 1937:27 ; Hägg 2004:383. Sur Celse, voir Dulière 1970:249.

³ Au point même d'effrayer les esprits par la seule divulgation de l'oeuvre, risque dont le premier traducteur anglais de la *Vita*, Charles Blount 1680, était conscient, d'après sa préface : cf. Petzke 1970:10–11. Voir aussi Dzielska 1986:193–212 : « Modern polemics over Apollonius of Tyana ».

⁴ Cf. *infra*, notes 28 et suiv.

vœu de sa commanditaire l'impératrice Julia Domna, contrebalancer le christianisme en proposant, moyennant la figure d'Apollonius, une alternative païenne pour le Christ.⁵

Il y a, en effet, bien des ressemblances à relever, dont certaines sautent aux yeux. On a dit que, comme Jésus, Apollonius est entré dans son apothéose par un procès (avec son « traître » à lui, à savoir le philosophe Euphratès) et par sa disparition.⁶ On l'a comparé à saint Paul à cause de ses voyages et sa « prédication » itinérante et parce qu'il est allé se justifier à Rome, devant le tribunal de l'empereur (livres VII–VIII).⁷ Mieux vaut cependant s'en tenir à des analogies plus précises.

Parmi les miracles, deux ou trois « exorcismes » peuvent être rapprochés des Évangiles, notamment celui d'un enfant que le démon obligeait à vivre dans des lieux solitaires (III 38)⁸ et celui (IV 25) du jeune philosophe Ménippe de Lycie (selon Philostrate, un des faits les plus célèbres de la vie d'Apollonius), dont la prétendue maîtresse, démasquée comme empuse,⁹ supplia Apollonius de ne pas la mettre à la torture pour lui faire avouer ce qu'elle était (comme dans le récit du démoniaque gérasénien chez les synoptiques).¹⁰

L'épisode de la jeune fille rendue à la vie à Rome (IV 45) rappelle par bien des traits la résurrection du fils de la veuve de Naïm et celle de la fille de Jaïre.¹¹ Au livre VIII, l'apparition d'Apollonius à ses compagnons inquiets et découragés (Démétrius et Damis), qu'il invite à toucher sa main (VIII 10–12), fait penser à Jésus qui apparaît à ses apôtres après la résurrection, tant chez Luc que chez Jean.¹² Dans le quatrième évangile, l'incrédulité de Thomas¹³ pourrait également avoir servi de paradigme à celle du jeune homme de Tyane qui ne crut en l'immortalité de l'âme qu'après avoir vu apparaître Apollonius (VIII 31). Voilà les passages les plus cités, sans oublier que, toujours à la fin du dernier livre où il passe en revue les récits qui circulaient sur la fin

⁵ Cf. *infra*, notes 48 et suiv.

⁶ Bernard 1977:271.

⁷ Sur les parallèles entre Apollonius et saint Paul, voir Pervo 1987:47, 81.

⁸ *Mt* 8:28–34; 17:14–18; *Mc* 1:23–26; 5:1–20; 9:1–29; *Lc* 4:33–37; 8:26–39; 9:37–43. Sur les détails, voir Puiggali: 117–130, ici 117.

⁹ À l'origine, un spectre envoyé par Hékate.

¹⁰ *Mc* 5:7–40; *Lc* 8:28–31; voir également *Mt* 8:29.

¹¹ Paulsen 2003:104–106, fait une comparaison détaillée avec *Lc* 7:12–15 (fils de la veuve de Naïm), mais Lagrange 1937:21, y voyait aussi un souvenir de *Lc* 8:40–56 (fille de Jaïre).

¹² *Lc* 24:36–43; *Jn* 20:19–23.

¹³ *Jn* 20:24–29.

terrestre d'Apollonius, Philostrate suggère une espèce d'ascension au ciel,¹⁴ accompagnée d'un chœur de jeunes filles (VIII 30).

Toutefois, on pourrait éventuellement s'interroger sur d'autres passages. Les sages discours tenus par l'adolescent Apollonius dans le temple d'Asklépios à Égées (I 11) font-ils écho à l'épisode du jeune Jésus assis parmi les docteurs du Temple de Jérusalem ?¹⁵ Toujours au premier livre, on apprend que Pythagore prônait la monogamie, mais qu'Apollonius, pythagoricien plus θεῖος que le maître dans sa recherche de la sagesse (I 2), s'abstenait de tout commerce avec une femme (I 13). Plus tard, à l'occasion d'un décret de Domitien interdisant de faire des eunuques, il dira même qu'il n'avait pas besoin de ses parties génitales (VI 42). Cette surenchère par rapport à la sexualité faut-il la rapprocher de l'Évangile de Mathieu, où Jésus étend le sixième commandement (« Tu ne commettras pas l'adultère ») au simple désir sexuel et fait ensuite l'éloge des « eunuques pour le royaume des Cieux » ?¹⁶ Précisons ici que ni Apollonius ni Jésus n'imposent cette condition à leurs disciples.

À l'instar de Jésus, Apollonius recrutait des adeptes qui l'accompagnaient dans ses déplacements. Mais quand les choses se corsent, lors de la persécution des philosophes par Néron, la plupart abandonnent leur maître sous toutes sortes de prétextes (IV 37), à l'exception de huit, avec lesquels il entrera à Rome (IV 39). Dans le cas de Jésus, c'est après son arrestation que les disciples l'abandonnèrent tous et s'enfuirent, selon deux des synoptiques (sauf Pierre, qui, pourtant, le reniera).¹⁷

Un des chefs d'accusation à l'encontre d'Apollonius était la rumeur selon laquelle il se faisait adorer comme un dieu (VII 21), comme Jésus fut accusé par le grand-prêtre de blasphémie pour avoir prétendu être le Christ, le fils de Dieu.¹⁸ Au même livre (VII 38), c'est après qu'Apollonius, en prison, eut tiré sa jambe des fers qui la retenaient, que son compagnon Damis comprit, pour la première fois, qu'il avait affaire à un homme d'une nature divine et supérieure à celle des hommes. Est-ce une réminiscence de la confession soudaine du centurion chez Marc, après que le rideau du Temple s'était déchiré en deux : « Vraiment cet homme était fils de Dieu ? »¹⁹

¹⁴ *Mc* 16:19; *Lc* 24:50–52; *Act* 1:9–11.

¹⁵ *Lc* 2:41–50.

¹⁶ *Mt* 5:27–30; 19:12.

¹⁷ *Mt* 26:56; *Mc* 14:50.

¹⁸ *Mt* 26:65; *Mc* 14:63–64.

¹⁹ *Mc* 15:39.

Un peu plus loin (VII 41), Apollonius ordonne à Damis de partir pour Dicéarchie (Putéoli) par la route de terre, de saluer le philosophe Démétrius, puis de se tourner vers la mer, du côté de l'île de Calypso. Là, ajouta-t-il, « vous me verrez vous apparaître », prédisant de la sorte l'épisode déjà évoqué (VIII 12). Philostrate s'est-il inspiré ici de la parole de Jésus sur le Mont des Oliviers: « Après ma résurrection, je vous précéderai en Galilée ? »²⁰

Dans sa très longue apologie, préparée mais jamais prononcée devant Domitien, Apollonius en appelle aux citoyens qui ont eu besoin de lui et qui ont pu profiter de sa bienfaisance. Les villes lui demandaient « de guérir les malades, de faire que leurs mystères fussent plus sains, plus sains leurs sacrifices, de mettre un terme à l'insolence, de rendre leur puissance aux lois ». Sa récompense pour tout cela était de les voir devenir meilleures (VIII 7.7). Cette énumération pastiche-t-elle de quelque manière l'apologie de Jésus devant les disciples que Jean-Baptiste lui avait envoyés depuis sa prison: « Les aveugles voient et les boiteux marchent, les lépreux sont guéris et les sourds entendent, les morts ressuscitent et la Bonne Nouvelle est annoncée aux pauvres ? »²¹

Que le lecteur se rassure, je ne continuerai pas sur cette lancée.²² Si, dans la *Vie d'Apollonius*, tous ces exemples étaient vraiment des échos du Nouveau Testament, on pourrait avoir l'impression que Philostrate était imprégné des textes sacrés chrétiens ou... qu'il y avait une source commune. En réalité, et abstraction faite de la discussion sur la vraisemblance de chacun de ces *loci* (tantôt, il s'agit d'un seul élément du récit concerné, tantôt plusieurs traits analogues se juxtaposent), on a affaire à des données très éparpillées dans une biographie qui est vraiment la mer à boire (deux volumes dans l'édition *Loeb*).²³

Comment la recherche s'est-elle positionnée, au fil des années, sur cette question? Apollonius fut un contemporain, au sens large, de Jésus et de Paul,²⁴ mais, puisque sa *Vita* date de 220 environ, son biographe a écrit *au moins* 120 ans après les Évangiles et les Actes. Son prétendu

²⁰ *Mc* 14:28.

²¹ *Mt* 11:4; *Lc* 7:22.

²² Voir la vieille étude de Baur 1832.

²³ Cette longueur est exceptionnelle pour une biographie. J'ai moi-même utilisé l'édition avec traduction allemande de Mumprecht 1983 et les traductions françaises de Chassang 1862² et de Grimal 1958:1031–1338.

²⁴ La *Vita* suggère la chronologie vers 3–vers 97 de notre ère, mais d'autres indices plaideraient pour une naissance plus tardive (vers 40): voir Hägg 2004:16–17.

disciple et compagnon, Damis de Ninive, dont Philostrate dit avoir utilisé les Mémoires (I 3), est très souvent considéré comme un personnage fictif (mais voir *infra*). Personne ne croit donc plus, aujourd'hui, à la thèse d'Eduard Norden selon laquelle la tradition ancienne relative aux discours d'Apollonius à Athènes (IV 18–22) aurait servi de modèle à celui de saint Paul sur l'Aréopage.²⁵ Ni à la thèse de Jean-Louis Bernard qui veut que des épisodes de la vie d'Apollonius, racontés et véhiculés par la foule, aient été incorporés aux Évangiles en tant que miracles, après remaniement (ainsi, la résurrection de la fille de Jaïre serait une adaptation simplifiée de VA IV 45, plutôt que l'inverse).²⁶ En fait, selon Bernard, Apollonius et Jésus incarnaient deux pôles du mythe du Christ, respectivement le pôle aristocratique et le pôle populaire.²⁷

Plus sérieuse était la thèse d'une toile de fond hellénistique commune. Elle voyait en Apollonius un représentant typique du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος préexistant tant à Philostrate et à ses sources qu'aux Évangiles. Or, quand on a commencé à prêcher le Christ aux païens, les chrétiens auraient conformé le Jésus historique palestinien aux attentes de la gentilité en le faisant entrer dans le moule du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος. Cela aurait abouti au Jésus à la fois fils de Dieu et thaumaturge des Évangiles. Richard Reitzenstein, Gilbert Wetter, Otto Weinrich et Hans Windisch ont travaillé à cette hypothèse,²⁸ mais c'est surtout Ludwig Bieler qui a clairement élaboré le concept de *göttlicher Mensch* en recourant dans une large mesure aux Évangiles et aux Vies de philosophes.²⁹ La thèse eut un très grand impact, culminant dans les années '60 du siècle dernier (avec notamment le livre d'Hans Dieter Betz).³⁰ Après que le célèbre Rudolf Bultmann s'y était rallié, suivi de ses élèves Paul Vielhauer et Helmut Köster,³¹ la christologie du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος avait conquis des pans importants de l'exégèse néotestamentaire.

À partir des années '70, toutefois, des critiques commençaient à se faire entendre (Wülfing von Martitz, Otto Betz, Martin Hengel, Klaus

²⁵ Act 17:22–34. Cf. Norden 1923²:31–56. Le point de départ est, en fait, l'allusion d'Apollonius (arrivé en Éthiopie) aux autels élevés, à Athènes, aux dieux inconnus (VI 3; cf. Act 17:24).

²⁶ Bernard 1977:229–230.

²⁷ *Ibid.*: 128–129.

²⁸ Voir Koskeniemi 1994:65–163 (Forschungsbericht); du Toit 1997:2–33 (id.).

²⁹ Bieler, I–II 1935–1936.

³⁰ Betz 1961; voir aussi l'article Id. 1983b, col.234–312.

³¹ Voir du Toit 1997:38.

Berger, Barry L. Blackburn, et d'autres).³² La notion de θεῖος ἄνθρωπος semblait mal définie, floue, pas du tout monolithique (Bieler n'avait-il pas voulu montrer *den Gesamttypus, gewissermassen die platonische Idee des antiken Gottmenschen?*).³³ Le syntagme même a longtemps passé, aux yeux des savants modernes, pour un terme fixe, un *terminus technicus*, mais—c'est ce dont se rendaient compte les critiques—il ne l'avait pas été dans l'Antiquité et ne correspondait donc pas à une catégorie antique. Certains ont alors essayé de différencier la notion,³⁴ mais on ne pouvait plus se passer d'une analyse sémantique approfondie.

On la doit à David S. du Toit, qui, dans un gros volume des *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* paru en 1997 et s'ouvrant par un état de la question de la problématique de l'« homme divin », a exploré le champ sémantique de θεῖος, δαίμονιος et θεσπέσιος dans toute une série de textes de l'époque impériale, parmi lesquels la *Vita Apollonii*. Il en conclut que ces termes sont rarement des adjectifs classificatifs, mais majoritairement des adjectifs qualificatifs, sémantiquement proches de εὐσεβής, θεοσεβής, θεοφιλής, ὅσιος (donc avec le sens de « consacré ou cher aux dieux, pieux ») et souvent appliqués à des archégètes ou des garants d'une tradition épistémologique (*Erkenntnistradition*), par ex. Homère, Platon, Polémon, Pythagore. Cela confine le θεῖος ἄνθρωπος dans la sphère du σοφὸς ἄνθρωπος plutôt que dans celle de l'ontologiquement divin ou de la thaumaturgie.³⁵ C'est donc dans ce sens que θεῖος s'applique à Apollonius (ou à Iarchas, le chef des brahmanes), sous la plume de Philostrate, y compris dans le passage où Damis reconnaît la θεία φύσις d'Apollonius (VII 38).³⁶

³² *Ibid.* : 31–35.

³³ Bieler, I 1935:4 : « sie [diese Arbeit] will vielmehr den Gesamttypus, gewissermassen die platonischen Idee des antiken Gottmenschen schauen lassen, der sich, mag der einzelne θεῖος gleich nie und nirgends alle wesentlichen Züge in letzter Vollkommenheit lückenlos in sich vereinigen, doch in jedem seiner Vertreter bald mehr, bald weniger ausprägt; jeder liefert Steine, die sich schliesslich zum anschaulichen Bilde vereinigen lassen ». Selon Gallagher, *op. cit.* (*infra*, note 34) : 13, la recherche a mal compris Bieler, mais du Toit 1997:19 (note 106) critique son rapprochement entre Bieler et l'*Idealtypus* de Weber.

³⁴ Cf. Tiede 1972 (fusion de deux types originellement distincts, à savoir le thaumaturge charismatique et le θεῖος σοφός des cercles philosophiques); Gallagher 1982 (diversité des catégories du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος hellénistique). Sur ce manque d'unité du concept, voir aussi Blackburn 1986:185–218; Id. 1991. Pour une interprétation du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος comme catégorie de l'histoire sociale, voir Georgi 1976:27–42; Carrington 1986.

³⁵ du Toit 1997:50–65; 261–274.

³⁶ *Ibid.* : 311–312.

Selon du Toit, Hiéroclès n'a fait que confirmer cet état de choses, lorsque, dans son *Φιλαλήθης λόγος* (vers 302), il opposa Apollonius au Christ, reprochant aux chrétiens leur crédulité. Eux, en effet, divinisent Jésus sur la base de quelques miracles, alors que les païens ne tiennent pas pour un dieu, mais pour un homme agréable aux dieux (*θεοῖς κεχαρισμένον ἄνδρα*) celui qui a accompli des *θαυμάσια*. C'est donc dans ce sens éthique qu'Hiéroclès a compris la qualification de *θεῖος* chez Philostrate.³⁷ Et ce n'est qu'à la suite de l'*Auseinandersetzung* avec le christianisme que les païens ont fini par envisager Apollonius comme un être divin au sens ontologique (Eunape de Sardes, [vers 400]).³⁸

Par conséquent, la terminologie du *θεῖος ἀνὴρ*/*θεῖος ἄνθρωπος* n'a pas été un signifiant pour le *Gottmensch* ou le thaumaturge charismatique (là où il est question de telles figures, cette terminologie manque) et ne permet pas de supposer une représentation conceptuelle servant de préalable à la théologie du fils de Dieu.³⁹ Or, par un autre biais, Erkki Koskenniemi était arrivé à la même conclusion, quelques années plus tôt (1994).⁴⁰ Constatant que le Jésus des Évangiles et l'Apollonius de Philostrate jouent un rôle prépondérant dans la « topique » du *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* (notamment chez Bieler), il doute que, si la *Vita Apollonii* n'avait pas existé, le type de l'« homme divin » ait jamais été conçu dans la recherche moderne. Puisque Apollonius s'avère être surtout une création de Philostrate (la tradition remontant au premier siècle serait peu sûre) et puisque, avant le milieu du II^e siècle de notre ère, on ne connaît que peu de thaumaturges païens, la christologie du *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* repose sur un raisonnement circulaire et doit donc être écartée.⁴¹ Dans un article plus récent, le même auteur a réaffirmé qu'Apollonius ne saurait passer pour un représentant de l'« homme divin » typique de l'hellénisme.⁴²

³⁷ *Ibid.*: 315–317 (cf. [pseudo-]Eusèbe, *Contra Hieroclem*, 2).

³⁸ *Ibid.*: 319 (voir aussi *infra*, note 109).

³⁹ *Ibid.*: 399–406.

⁴⁰ Koskenniemi 1994:187–189, 230–235.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 77–78, 169–178, 206–219 (liste d'autres thaumaturges). Koskenniemi prend donc aussi le contre-pied de Karl Ludwig Schmidt 1923:50–134, qui avait trouvé dans la *Vita Apollonii* de Philostrate les meilleurs parallèles avec les Évangiles. En ce qui concerne Bieler, Koskenniemi sous-estime le nombre de textes utilisés par cet auteur (il suffit de consulter son *Stellenregister*), les autres Vies de philosophes étant, il est vrai, plus tardives que la *Vie d'Apollonius*.

⁴² Koskenniemi 1998. Dans le même sillage: Evans 1995:245–250 (Excursus 2: Jesus and Apollonius of Tyana); du Toit 1999:149–166.

La thèse, si bien ancrée, du θεῖος ἀνὴρ semble donc sérieusement ébranlée aujourd'hui, même si elle résiste encore.⁴³ De toute façon, l'impression prévaut à présent qu'en matière d'antécédents et de parallèles, l'Ancien Testament (les miracles d'Élie et d'Élisée par exemple), certains pseudépigraphes et les traditions rabbiniques aident mieux à expliquer la stylisation de la figure du Christ que le prétendu « homme divin » hellénistique.⁴⁴ Ceci étant dit, certains relents apologétiques du débat⁴⁵ risquent néanmoins de donner lieu à des malentendus.

À la fin de son livre, David du Toit fait remarquer que son étude *sémantique* n'entendait pas contester la *possibilité* de l'existence d'un concept d'homme divin dans l'Antiquité.⁴⁶ Il avait d'ailleurs reconnu que les adjectifs étudiés s'emploient parfois comme des *relationelle Klassenadjektive*, en ce sens qu'ils impliquent *eine gewisse Beziehung* entre l'homme évoqué et les dieux ou les êtres divins (avant tout par le truchement de l'inspiration ou de l'illumination).⁴⁷ Or, ce sont notamment ces *rapports* particuliers et la concomitance d'un certain nombre de traits narratifs, ou de *topoi* si l'on veut, tels qu'on les trouve chez Bieler, qui inscrivent les Évangiles, la *Vita Apollonii* et d'autres textes païens, chrétiens et juifs dans un *discours* plus large, indépendamment de la question terminologique et de celle de l'antériorité et de l'interdépendance. On reviendra là-dessus, tout comme sur le problème de l'historicité de ce genre de récits.

Mais attardons-nous d'abord à la théorie inverse, celle de la dépendance de Philostrate par rapport au Nouveau Testament. La vieille thèse d'une contrefaçon délibérée des Évangiles pour poser Apollonius en rival du Christ, professée par Ferdinand Christian Baur (1832) et acceptée par quelques autres (parmi lesquels Pierre de Labriolle),⁴⁸ avait fini par être rejetée par la plupart des commentateurs,⁴⁹ tout en ayant

⁴³ Par ex. Hanus 1998:200–231 (résumé d'une thèse); Geerlings 2003:121–131 (les Évangiles comme variante chrétienne du concept).

⁴⁴ Cf. Evans 1995:246, 250.

⁴⁵ La critique du concept de θεῖος ἀνὴρ émane surtout de théologiens et d'exégètes du Nouveau Testament. À l'époque, ce dernier ne *pouvait* pas être original; aujourd'hui, l'originalité judéo-chrétienne est devenue impérative.

⁴⁶ du Toit 1997:406.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: 165.

⁴⁸ Baur 1832; de Labriolle 1934, 1942²:188. Autres exemples chez Koskenniemi 1994:184 (note 81).

⁴⁹ Voir le résumé de Grimal 1958:1028: « Aucun épisode n'y rappelle indiscutablement aucune page de la vie du Christ. Toute la biographie spirituelle d'Apollonius s'explique naturellement par ce que nous pouvons savoir de la pensée religieuse

été nuancée par M.-J. Lagrange (1937). Celui-ci ne croyait pas que comme lettré, Philostrate ait vraiment étudié les Évangiles, et encore moins les épîtres de saint Paul. Ne comprenant pas le christianisme, le biographe d'Apollonius entendait montrer la supériorité de la raison philosophique, renforcée par un contact avec les dieux qui lui donnait une force nouvelle. La dépendance réside donc moins dans une imitation que dans une contradiction (il y aurait eu imitation dans le choix des thèmes, mais contradiction dans la manière de les traiter).⁵⁰

Cependant, à partir des années '70, des voix se sont à nouveau élevées pour admettre le positionnement implicite de Philostrate vis-à-vis du Nouveau Testament, soit comme évident (W.L. Dulière, Jacques Boulogne),⁵¹ soit comme possible (Howard Kee)⁵² ou pour le suggérer prudemment (Jaś Elsner, Simon Swain).⁵³ Un des arguments avancés est précisément le silence étonnant (et forcé?) de Philostrate sur Jésus et sur les chrétiens, et ce à peu près 40 ans après que Celse eut déjà cru nécessaire de réfuter la religion des *χριστιανοί* dans son *Ἀληθῆς λόγος*.⁵⁴ Un homme si bien informé (notamment sur les juifs, qui vivent séparés du reste du monde [V 33]) et qui a fait lui-même beaucoup de voyages sur les traces d'Apollonius (I 2), doit avoir eu connaissance de la religion chrétienne et avoir rencontré des chrétiens (en lisant le seul Philostrate, on croirait que les chrétiens n'existaient pas...). L'absence de la moindre allusion trahirait donc en soi déjà un agenda caché.

En plus de cela, la commanditaire de la *Vita Apollonii*, Julia Domna, seconde épouse de Septime Sévère, appartenait à ces princesses syriennes très portées sur les questions philosophiques et religieuses. Sa nièce Mammaea convoqua Origène à Antioche et eut une entrevue avec lui.⁵⁵ Son fils, Alexandre Sévère, devenu empereur en 222 grâce

païenne au I^{er} siècle après J.-C. Supposer que Philostrate songe ici aux chrétiens est une hypothèse gratuite et qui doit être abandonnée. Comme elle n'explique rien, il vaut mieux en faire l'économie».

⁵⁰ Lagrange 1937:19–20.

⁵¹ Dulière 1970:250–251 ; Boulogne 1999:300.

⁵² Kee 1986:85.

⁵³ Elsner 1997:35 (la *Vita* plutôt comme *counter-Acts* que comme *counter-Gospel*); Swain 1999b:182, 184–185 (Philostrate aurait écrit pour contrer l'influence du christianisme à la cour, ou, au moins, par antipathie pour des groupes rivaux, parmi lesquels les chrétiens).

⁵⁴ Sur l'œuvre de Celse (vers 178) et sa réfutation par Origène, voir de Labriolle 1934, 1942²:111–169.

⁵⁵ Cf. Eusèbe, *Hist.Eccles.*, VI 21, 3–4. La rencontre a dû avoir lieu en 224–225 ou en 232.

à elle et à Maesa, soeur de Julia Domna, avait dans sa chapelle privée (*lararium*) une image du Christ aussi bien que d'Apollonius, à côté d'Abraham et d'Orphée.⁵⁶ La commande d'une Vie d'homme divin sur le modèle de l'Évangile aurait donc fait partie des stratégies déployées à la cour pour contrer le christianisme à la faveur d'une revitalisation du paganisme.⁵⁷

Force est de constater que les similitudes «troublantes» entre certains miracles de Jésus et d'Apollonius ne convainquent pas tout le monde du bien-fondé de cette thèse,⁵⁸ car on peut aussi les attribuer à un environnement religieux plus général.⁵⁹ Thomas Paulsen y ajoute que, si Philostrate avait vraiment voulu «concurrencer» Jésus comme thaumaturge, il se serait montré moins «distant» dans l'interprétation de certains miracles d'Apollonius (voir aussi *infra*).⁶⁰ Quant à Julia Domna, l'absence d'une politique active de persécution contre les chrétiens sous la dynastie des Sévères, rend invraisemblable une initiative littéraire anti-chrétienne de la part de l'impératrice, selon Erkki Koskenniemi.⁶¹ Peut-être le philologue et théologien finnois a-t-il raison de supposer qu'à l'époque de Philostrate le *Traditionsgut* chrétien (et notamment des récits miraculeux) s'était déjà longtemps infiltré dans la *narrativa* populaire (*volkstümlichen Erzählungen*). Le biographe d'Apollonius n'aurait donc pas emprunté au Nouveau Testament, mais: «Philostratos liebte gute Geschichten so sehr, dass er auf genaue Unterscheidung der Quellen, wie wir sie heute betreiben, keinen Wert legte».⁶² Cette hypothèse rejoint celle de Glen W. Bowersock. En effet, dans un livre

⁵⁶ Cf. Aelius Lampidius (*Historia Augusta*), *Alexander Severus*, 19, 2. On discute sur l'authenticité historique de ce témoignage.

⁵⁷ Boulogne 1999:300.

⁵⁸ Cf. Puiggali 1983:117–130, ici 117; voir déjà Hempel 1920:80.

⁵⁹ Voir par ex. Smith 1971:174–199, ici 186–187, et déjà Rohde 1872:23–61, ici 30, n1.

⁶⁰ Paulsen 2003:108–109 (voir *infra*, notes 236 et suiv.).

⁶¹ Koskenniemi 1991:76–77 (avec références sur la politique religieuse des Sévères).

⁶² Koskenniemi 1994:205–206: «Als Philostratos um 200–220 n. Chr. Traditionen über Apollonius sammelte, wäre es ihm wahrscheinlich selbst mit Hilfe der strengsten Quellenkritik unmöglich gewesen, das christliche Erzählgut vollständig herauszufiltern (+ note 154: Es gibt keinen Grund zu bestreiten, dass Philostratos mündliche Traditionen gesammelt hat...)...vielleicht aber hat er—mehr kann nicht gesagt werden—die ursprünglich christlichen Erzählungen über Jesus in mündlicher und schon gewandelter Form kennengelernt. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt waren die Erzählungen bereits mit anderen verschmolzen, von heidnischen Geschichten beeinflusst, und hatten vielleicht auch einen neuen Helden bekommen». Hägg 2004:394–395, se demande si Philostrate savait que son héros et Jésus étaient des contemporains.

paru la même année (1994), l'historien américain pose que, à force de chercher tout le temps des origines païennes pour les rites, expressions et images du christianisme, on a occulté les influences qui ont joué en sens inverse, de très bonne heure selon lui.⁶³

Le débat n'est donc pas clos, la question demeure ouverte et tout à fait légitime. Comme l'a formulé Andy M. Reimer dans sa monographie *Miracle and Magic: A Study in the Acts of the Apostles and the Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (2002), le terrain «comparatif» s'avère toujours fertile «somewhere between parallelomania and parallelonoia». ⁶⁴ De toute manière, d'une part l'état d'avancement et de diffusion (et, par corollaire, de «menace potentielle») du christianisme dans l'«empire gréco-romain»⁶⁵ et, d'autre part, le degré de nouveauté que cette *secta*⁶⁶ d'origine sémitique a apporté à la civilisation antique, constituent des éléments-clés dans la discussion, qui touchera a fortiori les Vies de philosophes plus tardives. Ainsi, d'après Lucien Jerphagnon et Mark Edwards, la *Vie de Plotin* n'est autre que «l'évangile de Plotin selon Porphyre», qui a composé cet ouvrage vers 300.⁶⁷

On ne perdra pas de vue, cependant, que tant les Évangiles (et les Actes des apôtres) que la *Vita Apollonii* sont aussi à la fois beaucoup plus et autre chose que ce qui se prête à une comparaison.⁶⁸ Après la lecture patiente du texte de Philostrate, accompagnée de moult échanges de vue avec mes collègues gantois et avec le jeune doctorant dont le travail était à l'origine du colloque,⁶⁹ mon impression générale est que, en dépit d'analogies ponctuelles et d'une certaine parenté sotériologique, on est confronté à deux mondes très différents. D'un côté celui d'un Messie eschatologique annonciateur du Royaume de Dieu et de la fin et du jugement du monde, ancré dans l'apocalyptique juive du début de

⁶³ Bowersock 1994:127. L'auteur pousse loin ce raisonnement en admettant par ex. que le récit de la Cène était déjà connu de Pétrone (cf. *Satyricon*, 141, 2-4), donc avant la rédaction des Évangiles (p. 138).

⁶⁴ Reimer 2002:18.

⁶⁵ Comme l'appelle Paul Veyne 2005.

⁶⁶ Au sens neutre de ce mot latin.

⁶⁷ Jerphagnon 1990:41-52; Edwards 2000a:52-71.

⁶⁸ Voir aussi Petzke 1970:230: «...die VA und die übrige Apolloniustradition wurde immer schon unter neutestamentlichen Fragestellungen untersucht».

⁶⁹ Notre groupe de lecture comprenait, outre le doctorant Wannes Gyselinck et moi-même, mes collègues gantois Kristoffel Demoen (directeur de la thèse) et Danny Praet, et aussi Stelios Panayotakis, nommé entre-temps à l'Université de Crète.

notre ère⁷⁰ et dans une logique de péché, de rémission et de rédemption;⁷¹ de l'autre côté celui, beaucoup plus « universaliste », d'un sage religieux désireux de s'instruire et de réaliser en lui la somme de toutes les philosophies et de toutes les sagesse, avant tout le pythagorisme certes, mais s'ouvrant, pour ainsi dire aux quatre coins du monde ou presque, à toutes sortes de « sciences », celles en particulier des mages de Mésopotamie, des brahmanes indiens et des gymnosophistes d'Éthiopie, tout en restant lui-même le héraut de l'hellénisme et de sa παιδεία.

Les dialogues où le protagoniste s'en sort avec des réponses habiles et saisissantes sont plus nombreux et plus prolixes (socratisme oblige) dans la *Vie d'Apollonius* que dans les Évangiles (ou les Actes). Toutefois, nonobstant l'autorité avec laquelle Apollonius parle lui-même (plus que Socrate),⁷² les paroles du Christ sont, en général, plus percutantes, moins superficielles sans doute⁷³ et moins nuancées, ce qui a peut-être contribué à la victoire ultérieure du christianisme, *en dépit* de son horizon initial très borné.⁷⁴ Mais c'est là évidemment un constat *post factum*.

La *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane*, quant à elle, est un texte tellement vaste, riche et varié qu'elle ne saurait ne pas apparaître comme un témoignage précieux de l'état de la philosophie et de la religiosité païennes *en soi*, au début du III^e siècle, du moins dans certains cercles (mais voir aussi *infra*).⁷⁵ On a donc toutes les raisons d'étudier Philostrate et son héros *propter se*, leur *Sitz im Leben* à eux étant la grande tradition hellénique, la tradition philosophique, religieuse, mais aussi littéraire (la seconde sophistique).

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Ceci étant dit, et pour ne pas sortir de ma propre ornière scientifique, je voudrais reprendre le problème déjà abordé des « analogies » par

⁷⁰ Voir l'esquisse pénétrante de Kee 1983:146–173.

⁷¹ Ce dernier aspect est principalement paulinien.

⁷² Cf. Billault 2000:121 : « La démarche d'Apollonius se situe donc à l'opposé de celle de Socrate. Au lieu d'associer son interlocuteur à une recherche dubitative de la vérité, il l'énonce devant lui avec une autorité qui donne à ses paroles l'accent de décrets royaux (I 17). Lorsqu'il recourt à l'interrogative socratique, il ne tarde pas à monopoliser la parole pour lui démontrer l'ampleur de son erreur et de son ignorance ».

⁷³ Voir aussi Hahn 2003:92 : « Zunächst kann Philostrat selbst keinesfalls als Propagandist oder auch nur Anhänger der pythagorischen Lehre bezeichnet werden, wie auch eigentlich philosophische Positionen jenseits populärer Allgemeinplätze in der Schrift nicht vertieft werden ».

⁷⁴ Le terrain d'action de Jésus se limitait à la Galilée et la Judée.

⁷⁵ Cf. par ex. Hahn 2003:94–95.

un autre biais que celui de la dépendance. Depuis longtemps, on le sait (voir *supra*), d'aucuns ont invoqué, pour expliquer telle ou telle similitude, l'environnement religieux, la mentalité, l'*Erlebnisstruktur*, les schèmes de pensée que les hommes de l'Antiquité (tardive) avaient en commun, quelle que fût leur religion.⁷⁶ Or, dans notre cas, il faut se rendre compte qu'il y avait aussi un *discours* commun aux juifs, païens et chrétiens. Il s'agit du « discours hagiographique », qui figure dans le titre de la présente contribution.

On a souvent déjà souligné la dimension hagiographique de la *Vie d'Apollonius*,⁷⁷ comme celle d'autres Vies de philosophes plus tardives (jusqu'au VI^e siècle : Vies de Pythagore, de Plotin, de Proclus, d'Isidore d'Alexandrie, de Platon). Par leur « célébration hagiographique » (Richard Goulet), ces textes baignent dans la sphère du *holy man* païen, de la « sainteté » païenne.⁷⁸

Qui dit hagiographie, pense néanmoins d'abord aux saints chrétiens. Or, l'hagiographie chrétienne est elle aussi essentiellement postérieure à Philostrate. Certes, quelques Actes et Passions de martyrs (grecs ou latins) lui sont antérieurs, mais ce sont des documents hagiographiques très partiels (ne portant que sur le procès et la mort du héros) et encore peu élaborés littérairement. On pourrait éventuellement qualifier Apollonius de « quasi-martyr » (ou de « confesseur » païen, si l'on veut),⁷⁹ puisqu'il était prêt à mourir pour la philosophie (VII 14 et 31), qu'il ne craignait pas les tortures (VII 34), d'ailleurs point susceptibles de nuire à son âme (VII 36; VIII 5), et qu'il se montrait intrépide face aux tyrans (IV 43; VII 1 et 31, VIII *passim* : Néron et surtout Domitien). Mais tout cela s'inscrit plutôt dans une longue tradition de *philosophes* résistants (VII 21), dont lui était le plus grand aux yeux de Philostrate (VII 3).

⁷⁶ Voir *supra*, note 59, et Schneider 1954:194–198; Marrou 1977:42–51 (« La nouvelle religiosité »).

⁷⁷ Par ex. Meunier 1936:18; Goulet 1981:164; Anderson 1986:136 (« an encyclopedia of hagiography »); Elsner 1997:23; Boulogne 1999:302: « La biographie tend à prendre un caractère hagiographique et à suivre un schéma type, qui se retrouve dans l'*Évangile de Matthieu*, tout comme chez Diogène Laërce et Jamblique, marqué par une ordonnance où l'on passe du nom et de l'origine à l'éducation et à la formation intellectuelle, puis aux faits et dits principaux, avant d'en arriver à la mort et à la survie, par l'intermédiaire des disciples ». Je ne suis pas d'accord avec cet auteur pour assigner à Diogène Laërce une perspective hagiographique, car il mélange éloges et critiques (voir *infra*, sous 3).

⁷⁸ Cf. Fowden 1982:33–59; Kirschner 1984:105–124; Joly 1989:11–20; Anderson 1994; Hanus 1998:229; Edwards 2000b; Jones 2004.

⁷⁹ Le *confessor* (ὁμολογητής) était à l'origine le *martyr designatus* (en prison, mais sans exécution).

La première « Passion-Vie » (le passage entre *Passio* et *Vita*), celle de saint Cyprien de Carthage par le diacre Pontius, date de 259 et est écrite en latin.⁸⁰ Je sais qu'on a récemment voulu faire remonter au III^e siècle la *Passion/Vie de saint Polycarpe*, évêque de Smyrne (dont les *Actes* de la seconde moitié du II^e siècle constituent notre premier μαρτύριον grec), mais cette tentative n'a guère convaincu et n'a donc pas ébranlé la datation traditionnelle (IV^e ou même V^e siècle).⁸¹ Pour avoir la première véritable biographie spirituelle chrétienne, il faut attendre le Βίος Ἀντωνίου d'Athanase d'Alexandrie, peu après 356, c'est-à-dire près de 140 ans après la *Vita Apollonii*.⁸²

Ce qui existe bel et bien *avant* Philostrate, ce sont les plus anciens Actes apocryphes des apôtres, au nombre de cinq, transmis en plusieurs langues, mais rarement dans leur intégralité, sauf les Actes de Thomas du début du III^e siècle, qu'on a appelés « la première biographie d'un saint syrien ». ⁸³ Sans être des « biographies » complètes, ils ne manquent pas d'affinités avec les Vies de philosophes : je pense au rapport prédication/voyages, à l'élément thaumaturgique et l'élément tératologique (toutes sortes de merveilles, plantes et animaux y compris). Éric Junod s'est demandé s'il n'y a pas de dessein similaire partiel sous-jacent aux deux groupes de textes (avec des récits plus tardifs dans les deux filières), qui, de toute façon, ressortissent à une littérature romanesque au sens large (celle des πράξεις et des περίοδοι y incluse).⁸⁴ D'autres que lui ont appelé de leurs vœux des études comparatives approfondies sur ces Actes apocryphes et, notamment, la *Vita Apollonii*.⁸⁵

Ce que j'appelle discours hagiographique, transcende deux facteurs. Premièrement les genres littéraires, car il se greffe sur plusieurs d'entre eux : la biographie, le roman, la nouvelle, l'arétologie, l'encomion ou panégyrique (par exemple, au IV^e siècle, l'ἐπιτάφιος λόγος de Libanius pour l'empereur Julien ou celui de Grégoire de Nazianze pour saint Basile).⁸⁶ La biographie spirituelle est sûrement le principal de ces

⁸⁰ Bastiaensen 1997⁴.

⁸¹ Cf. Stewart-Sykes 2000. Mais voir le compte rendu critique de Dehandschutter, *Vigiliae Christianae* 58, 2004:209–214.

⁸² Bartelink 1994.

⁸³ Cf. Drijvers 1988:11–26, ici 15.

⁸⁴ Junod 1981:209–219.

⁸⁵ Par ex. Klauck, in *Biblical Interpretation* 12,3, 2004:320 (compte rendu de Reimer [2002]).

⁸⁶ Libanius, *Or.*, 18 (éd. A.F. Norman, I, London 1969 [Loeb]:278–486) ; Grégoire de Nazianze, *Or.*, 43 (éd. J. Bernardi, Paris 1992, *Sources Chrétiennes*, 384:116–306). Sur les genres hagiographiques, voir Van Uytanghe 1987a:col.159–178.

genres aux contours souvent flous, mais elle est facilement recoupée par d'autres ; à vrai dire, la discussion sur les genres n'est jamais simple, comme le montre le cas de la *Vie d'Apollonius* elle-même et encore plus celui des Évangiles.⁸⁷

Deuxièmement, ce discours hagiographique transcende la question des dépendances mutuelles et ponctuelles. Si Philostrate réceptionne peut-être (consciemment ou inconsciemment) tel récit évangélique (voir *supra*), saint Jérôme, lui, semble s'inspirer du passage où Philostrate va jusqu'à guérir, à Tarse, un chien enragé (VI 43), pour le transformer en chameau possédé dans sa *Vie de saint Hilarion de Gaza*.⁸⁸ On peut déceler quelques emprunts à une *Vie de Pythagore* utilisée à la fois par Porphyre et Jamblique (sans doute celle qui est attribuée à Apollonius lui-même : voir *infra*) dans la *Vita Antonii* d'Athanase,⁸⁹ alors que Jamblique lui-même semble déjà se souvenir du monachisme dans son *De vita Pythagorica*.⁹⁰

Cette intertextualité ponctuelle et subtile me paraît moins importante que le fait que voici : dans un certain nombre d'ouvrages qui s'échelonnent sur une période allant du tout début de l'époque impériale jusqu'à la fin de l'Antiquité tardive et qui viennent d'horizons divers (juif, judéo-chrétien [les Évangiles], chrétien, païen), on découvre, *malgré* toutes les différences et toute une évolution diachronique, un tronc commun (minimal).⁹¹ Selon Morton Smith, qui travaille surtout avec le concept (plutôt chimérique) d'arétologie, il faut compter avec des pertes beaucoup plus anciennes, car le snobisme de la littérature antique négligeait la *Kleinliteratur*⁹² (où, soit dit entre parenthèses, on peut difficilement

⁸⁷ Voir Lo Cascio 1974. Qu'on se rappelle d'ailleurs le titre très générique : Τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον. Pour ce qui est des Évangiles, voir les Forschungsberichte dans ANRW, II, 25, 2. 1984:1463–1542, 1543–1704.

⁸⁸ Cf. *Vita Hilarionis*, 14 (éd. Bastiaensen & Smit). Sur la *Vie de saint Paul de Thèbes* du même auteur : P. Hamblenne 1993:209–234.

⁸⁹ Cf. Bartelink 1994:63–64. Athanase a aussi connu la *Vie de Plotin* par Porphyre, mais, selon Bartelink, les emprunts avaient pour fonction d'établir un contraste entre Antoine et les héros païens (à comparer à la note 50 : Lagrange à propos de Philostrate et les Évangiles). Voir également *infra*, note 251.

⁹⁰ Éd. Deubner & Klein 1975 (*Vita*, 253 : μονάζοντες ἐν ταῖς ἐρημίαις).

⁹¹ J'ai analysé un grand nombre de textes juifs, païens et chrétiens à l'aune du discours hagiographique minimal dans Van Uytenghe 2001.

⁹² Smith 1971:179 : « Of these [= the holy men of the Graeco-Roman world] our knowledge is limited by the snobbishness of the literary tradition of antiquity. Ancient literature is almost entirely upper class and rationalistic » ; note 38 (à la même page) : « This is one of the main reasons why the New Testament, a lower middle class product, seems so different from Greek and Roman literary works ». Rappelons ici qu'une *Vie de Pythagore* attribuée à Apollonius lui-même (voir *infra*) est perdue.

ranger l'oeuvre de Philostrate). Quoi qu'il en soit, nous ne pouvons nous baser que sur des textes *conservés*. Or, le premier auteur connu qui développe un discours hagiographique plus ou moins achevé, est sans doute le juif hellénisé Philon d'Alexandrie, dans ses Vies de patriarches, et singulièrement dans sa *Vie de Moïse*,⁹³ où ce dernier apparaît comme l'incarnation parfaite de la vertu et de la sagesse (selon la tradition stoïcienne), le σοφὸς βασιλεύς, comme un ascète et un bienfaiteur.⁹⁴ Les représentants suivants n'ont pas forcément puisé là-dedans, mais là n'est pas la question, analogie n'impliquant pas toujours généalogie.⁹⁵

Le discours hagiographique est un canevas structurel que j'ai défini ailleurs⁹⁶ à partir de quatre composantes (le statut du héros, les rapports entre l'énoncé et la réalité historique, le dessein performatif, les archétypes de stylisation):

1) L'objet même, le héros, n'est pas un dieu, même si certains de ses contemporains ou de la postérité pouvaient le considérer comme tel (selon Philostrate, Damis de Ninive voyait en Apollonius un dieu et s'attacha à lui après avoir constaté qu'il connaissait toutes les langues ainsi que les pensées secrètes des hommes [I 19]). On n'a donc pas affaire à de la mythologie et les auteurs ne sont pas des mythographes. Par contre, le protagoniste est toujours lié à Dieu, aux dieux ou au divin par un rapport particulier, quel que soit le sens de θεῖος, δαιμόνιος, θεσπέσιος dans les textes concernés. À juste titre, en effet, Howard C. Kee fait remarquer que ce *special relationship* ne se déduit pas du titre de θεῖος ἀνὴρ (voir *supra*).⁹⁷

Patricia Cox, quant à elle, se sert de l'« échelle de divinité » chère aux néoplatoniciens pour y placer les philosophes d'après leurs biographes. Ainsi, Apollonius, tout comme Pythagore (chez Porphyre et Jamblique), est « fils de dieu »: sa mère enceinte a été « visitée » en songe par le dieu Protée (I 4), les cygnes attendaient sa naissance, et, par le trait de foudre remontant vers l'éther au moment de l'accouchement, « les dieux—selon l'interprétation de Philostrate—indiquaient et prédisaient la célébrité qui devait mettre l'enfant au-dessus de tout ce qui est au monde, l'installer près des dieux, bref tout ce qu'il fut plus tard » (I 5).⁹⁸

⁹³ Arnaldez e.a. (éd.) 1967. Voir déjà Bieler, II 1936:30; du Toit 1997:23 (note 137).

⁹⁴ Pour ce qui est du merveilleux, Philon s'en tient aux récits bibliques, mais à la fin (II 291), il suggère une espèce d'« ascension » de Moïse, à la manière d'Élie.

⁹⁵ Cf. Smith (*supra*, note 59); Van Uytfanghe 2001:col.1336–1341.

⁹⁶ Cf. Van Uytfanghe 1987a:col.155–157; Id. 1993:148–149.

⁹⁷ Kee 1986:84.

⁹⁸ Voir aussi Hahn 2003:97: « All dies verbindet sich mit einem nicht erst von

D'autres philosophes, Plotin (chez Porphyre) et Origène (chez Eusèbe) bénéficiaient plutôt, selon Cox, d'un *godlike status*.⁹⁹

On apprend par Aristote et Jamblique que les Pythagoriciens, eux, distinguaient parmi les vivants doués de raison trois espèces : les dieux, les hommes, et les êtres du genre de Pythagore.¹⁰⁰ Ce dernier avait la réputation d'être en rapports constants avec les dieux, nous dit Philostrate (I 1). Apollonius, de son côté, nourrissait un idéal tout voisin de celui du Maître, mais il aspirait à la sagesse et s'élevait au-dessus des tyrans de façon plus divine encore (θειότερον) que Pythagore (I 2).¹⁰¹ Dans son apologie, il rappelle la doctrine des Indiens et des Égyptiens et explique lui-même à Domitien qu'« il faut un homme pour régler cet univers des âmes, un homme dont la sagesse fait un dieu » (VIII 7.7). Sa sagesse, qui est inséparable d'une vision du monde et d'un mode de vie, est la source des pouvoirs surnaturels que les dieux lui consentent.¹⁰² Il est toujours à leur écoute (sur sa piété : voir *infra*), la proximité du divin est un trait permanent de son existence.¹⁰³ Il dit vivre sous le gouvernement des dieux (V 35) et spécialement sous la protection de Zeus (VIII 7.2), l'artisan de toutes choses ou l'« architecte de l'univers » selon la traduction (aux accents maçonniques ?) d'Alexis Chassang (IV 30). Les dieux en général tiennent Apollonius en haute estime (I 28) et guident son cheminement (I 18 et 28 ; VIII 12).

Quand les brahmanes prennent congé de lui, ils lui assurent que non seulement après sa mort, mais de son vivant même, il serait considéré par beaucoup comme un dieu (III 50). Toutefois, à l'instar de Pierre et de Barnabé à Lystres,¹⁰⁴ Apollonius, sous la plume de Philostrate, se défend d'être un dieu. Alors que les Tyanien l'appelaient fils de Zeus, lui se déclarait simplement fils d'Apollonius (I 6).¹⁰⁵ À Alexandrie, on le regardait comme un dieu (V 24), mais à Sparte, il avait lui-même

Philostrat betonten aussergewöhnlichen Verhältnis des Apollonius zu den Göttern, das bereits die von Vorzeichen und Wundern bestimmten Umstände seiner Geburt programmatisch ankündigen ».

⁹⁹ Cox 1983:34.

¹⁰⁰ Jamblique, *De Vita Pythagorica*, 6, 31 = Aristote, *De Pythagoreis*, fr.192. Cf. Goulet 1981:176.

¹⁰¹ Sur le sens du terme, voir du Toit 1997:306–307. De toute façon, Apollonius modelait sa vie sur celle de Pythagore (I 7), ce qui fait de sa biographie aussi une *Vita Pythagorica* : cf. Moreschini 1990:43 et *infra*, la note 161.

¹⁰² Voir Billault 1993a:277 ; Id. 2000:124.

¹⁰³ Billault 2000:121–122.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Act 14:11–12 (simple parallèle).

¹⁰⁵ Il aurait donc porté le même nom que son père « terrestre ».

décliné des θεοφάνια (honneurs divins) pour éviter l'envie (IV 31), ce qui demeure quelque peu ambigu. À Domitien, qui, comme d'autres lors de son passage de la prison vers le palais impérial (VII 31), était frappé par son apparence surnaturelle, il explique que, visiblement, Athéna ne l'avait pas encore purifié à ce point qu'il pouvait distinguer les dieux ou démons et les hommes (VII 32).

Un des chefs d'accusation à l'encontre d'Apollonius fut précisément que les gens le traitaient comme un dieu. Le philosophe nie avoir convoité ou cherché les honneurs divins (VIII 7.7) et en même temps il relativise son cas individuel: tout homme que l'on considère comme vertueux est honoré du titre de dieu (VIII 5). La doctrine des sages indiens sur le dieu δημιουργός qui est bon, ne lui permet-elle pas d'affirmer que les hommes de bien ont quelque chose de divin (VIII 7.7)?¹⁰⁶ En un autre endroit, Philostrate lui fait évoquer les philosophes «en qui, entre tous, les dieux prennent plaisir» (V 20). Une certaine ambivalence subsiste donc. Comme d'autres philosophes dont l'Antiquité tardive nous a légué des biographies, Apollonius n'est ni un dieu ni un sorcier, mais il est tout de même marqué par le divin.¹⁰⁷ On a affaire à une incarnation humaine *partielle* du divin, dans un contexte de polythéisme hénothéiste.¹⁰⁸

Les textes juifs et chrétiens, eux, opèrent dans un environnement monothéiste. Jésus lui-même est le fils de l'Homme ou le fils de Dieu, mais il n'est pas encore Dieu le Fils. C'est là une réflexion théologique ultérieure, comme on en trouvera une aussi chez Eunape de Sardes à propos d'Apollonius (Philostrate aurait dû intituler son oeuvre «Visite d'un dieu chez les hommes»).¹⁰⁹ Certaines péripécies évangéliques écartent même cette assimilation ou identification,¹¹⁰ ce qui, évidemment,

¹⁰⁶ Et au même chapitre (son apologie devant l'empereur): «Aussi, lorsqu'ils me regardaient comme un dieu, leur erreur t'était utile, car ils ne m'écoutaient qu'avec plus de zèle, dans leur crainte de faire ce qui déplaisait à un dieu. Mais en fait telle n'était pas leur pensée: ils se disaient seulement qu'il y a une certaine parenté (ξυγγένεια) entre l'homme et la divinité, qui fait que l'homme seul parmi les êtres vivants, connaît les dieux et lui permet de réfléchir à sa propre nature et à ce qui le fait participer à la divinité».

¹⁰⁷ Goulet 1981:193.

¹⁰⁸ Boulogne 1999:303.

¹⁰⁹ *Vitae sophistarum*, 1.454. Voir du Toit 1999:319: «Erst die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christentum schuf die Voraussetzung dafür, so dass es nicht verwundert, wenn Eunapios etwa hundert Jahre später die VA rezipiert und schreibt...».

¹¹⁰ Par ex. Mc 10:18: «Pourquoi m'appelles-tu bon? Nul n'est bon que Dieu seul» (voir aussi Lc 18:19); Mt 27:46; Mc 15:34: «Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, pourquoi m'as-tu abandonné?».

n'enlève rien au rapport très particulier de Jésus avec Dieu (« son Père »), tel que les évangélistes nous le font connaître.

Le dogme chrétien a donc pleinement divinisé Jésus. Or, s'il est vrai que l'idée de la « divinisation » de l'homme n'est pas étrangère à certains théologiens platonisants comme Philon et Clément d'Alexandrie, Origène ou Grégoire de Nysse,¹¹¹ force est de constater que la distinction est toujours très nettement affirmée dans les biographies de patriarches de Philon et dans l'hagiographie chrétienne: le saint chrétien (tout comme Moïse par exemple) est non pas un être divin, mais l'homme *de* Dieu (ἄνθρωπος Θεοῦ, *vir Dei*), le serviteur *du* Seigneur (θεράπων Κυρίου, *servus Domini*).¹¹² Cependant, ici également, le rapport mystique avec Dieu et « les choses célestes » est constant. Le saint bénéficie de la grâce et de la protection divines, et c'est de cette grâce et de sa propre vertu que découlent aussi ses charismes. Néanmoins, l'insistance répétitive de l'hagiographie sur le théocentrisme des miracles (c'est Dieu qui les accomplit par l'*intermédiaire* du saint) laisse entendre que ce principe n'était pas toujours facile à inculquer à tous les fidèles.¹¹³

Si les études récentes sur le sens de θεῖος et ses synonymes (voir *supra*) semblent avoir atténué la différence théorique entre le θεῖος ἄνθρωπος païen et l'ἄνθρωπος Θεοῦ chrétien, le vécu quotidien qu'on peut lire sur et entre les lignes l'avait sans doute déjà gommée: les *holy men* des deux traditions faisaient fonction, *de facto*, de θεῖοι ἄνδρες (au sens que l'on donnait autrefois à ce syntagme) pour ceux qui les admiraient, consultaient, vénéraient et statufiaient. Philostrate lui-même illustre cette donnée à plusieurs reprises.

2) Cela nous mène au deuxième facteur, le rapport entre l'énoncé et le substrat historique. Comme tout discours, le discours hagiographique est d'abord une réalité langagière et textuelle. Ce que nous avons, ce sont des textes, ou une écriture; d'un point de vue purement « nominaliste », en disant cela on a dit l'essentiel. Le *linguistic turn* du début des années '80 du siècle dernier a d'ailleurs réorienté la science historique dans ce sens-là: l'« histoire comme récit » a révolutionné la notion même d'historicité. Toutefois, il a d'autant moins empêché la vieille question *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist* de refaire toujours surface,¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Voir par ex. Canévet 1966:spéc.998–1001.

¹¹² Voir déjà Bieler, II 1936:24–36; Steidle 1956:148–200.

¹¹³ Cf. Van Uytanghe 2000:67–144, ici 118–119.

¹¹⁴ Je renvoie à mes réflexions dans A. Scharer & G. Scheibelreiter 1994:194–195. Ce volume contient les Actes d'un colloque tenu à Zwettl (Autriche) en mars 1993, où, à la suite du discours de clôture de Patrick Geary, on a âprement discuté de la question.

que les textes dont nous parlons se veulent explicitement historiques au sens classique du terme.¹¹⁵

À ce sujet, l'introduction de Jacques Fontaine à son édition commentée de la *Vie de saint Martin de Tours* par Sulpice Sévère¹¹⁶—un véritable traité méthodologique pour la lecture d'un récit hagiographique—a introduit la notion-clé de *stylisation*. Celle-ci se déroule généralement en trois phases : la stylisation inchoative du personnage et de sa propre subjectivité, la tradition orale et éventuellement écrite intermédiaire, qui continue d'orienter et d'amplifier le substrat historique, et la mise en forme et le travail littéraires de l'auteur ou du rédacteur. L'importance et le dosage de ces phases peuvent varier considérablement d'un texte à l'autre, tout comme les avis des historiens, exégètes et philologues divergent parfois sensiblement sur des cas individuels (celui d'Apolonius y compris).

Les textes purement légendaires ou fictifs, à substrat historique nul ou quasi nul, sont loin d'être majoritaires, même au Moyen Âge. Une découverte peut néanmoins changer la donne dans un sens ou dans l'autre. Ainsi, jusqu'il y a peu, le substrat historique de la *Vie de Moïse* par Philon d'Alexandrie se réduisait à ce que les historiens croyaient pouvoir tirer des récits bibliques. Or, l'on sait que les fouilles de deux archéologues israéliens, Israel Finkelstein et Neil Asker Silberman, ont sérieusement ébranlé l'histoire biblique et mis en question jusqu'à l'existence même d'Abraham et de Moïse, notamment.¹¹⁷ Quel que soit le substrat historique (souvent, mais pas toujours, corrélatif au décalage chronologique entre l'époque du personnage et celle de l'auteur),¹¹⁸ une règle (rappelée par Patricia Cox à propos des Vies de philosophes)¹¹⁹ veut qu'un texte hagiographique nous renseigne davantage sur l'environnement mental de l'hagiographe que sur le saint.

Un autre théoricien de l'hagiologie, Friedrich Lotter, recourt au concept de *Memorat* et distingue *Ergebnislegenden* (avec des témoins oculaires), *Erinnerungslegenden* (consignées par écrit moins d'un demi-siècle après le décès du protagoniste) et *Traditionslegenden*

¹¹⁵ Cf. Reimer 2002:41–44: «From 'Narrative World' to 'Historical World'».

¹¹⁶ Fontaine 1967.

¹¹⁷ Finkelstein & Silberman 2001.

¹¹⁸ Que cette règle ne soit pas absolue, le quatrième Évangile l'atteste déjà, car, tout en étant le dernier en date et tout en étant extrêmement «théologique», il contient quelques données «historiques» confirmées notamment par l'archéologie.

¹¹⁹ Cox 1983:120 (note 68).

très tardives.¹²⁰ Fontaine et (surtout) Lotter ont souligné également les parallélismes avec l'exégèse moderne de la Bible, et notamment les méthodes de la *Formgeschichte* et de son instrumentaire de *Traditionsgut*, *Redaktionsgeschichte*, *Episodenerzählungen*, etc. Or, précisément, Dietmar Esser et davantage encore Gerd Petzke ont comparé le *Traditionsprozess* de la *Vita Apollonii* à celui des Évangiles moyennant ces mêmes méthodes de la *Formgeschichte*.¹²¹ Les réserves d'Erkki Koskenniemi sur ce point¹²² n'ont pas empêché Henning Paulsen d'approfondir la question en la focalisant sur la *Wunderüberlieferung* de la *Vie d'Apollonius*.¹²³

Qu'en est-il? On connaît les discussions interminables sur le Jésus historique et le Jésus «kérygmatic» et sur la fiabilité des Évangiles et de la tradition (écrite et surtout orale) qui leur est antérieure. Du pessimisme sur nos connaissances possibles relatives au Jésus historique on est passé aujourd'hui, à la suite de la «troisième quête» (*the Third Quest*), à un plus grand optimisme (auquel ont contribué les études sur le judaïsme de l'époque intertestamentaire et les témoignages archéologiques).¹²⁴

Bien des saints (et leur tradition hagiographique) ont fait l'objet d'un débat similaire (plus modeste évidemment),¹²⁵ et c'est aussi le cas d'Apollonius de Tyane. Il me semblerait aussi farfelu, aujourd'hui, de nier l'existence historique d'Apollonius que de nier celle de Jésus¹²⁶ (ou celle, par exemple, de Paul de Thèbes ou Hilarion de Gaza, dont saint Jérôme a écrit les Vies romancées).¹²⁷ Toutefois, sur le rapport—et le décalage—entre le «Ur-Apollonius» du premier siècle de notre ère¹²⁸

¹²⁰ Lotter 1971:195–202; Id. 1976:1–20.

¹²¹ Esser 1969; Petzke 1970.

¹²² Koskenniemi 1994:50–56, 177 (l'auteur admet que l'existence et l'utilisation d'une ample tradition orale préphilostatéenne ne font aucun doute, mais il appelle à la prudence pour ce qui est de la comparaison avec la tradition relative à Jésus).

¹²³ Paulsen 1997.

¹²⁴ Voir Evans 1995:9, 45–46 (note 43). (cette «troisième quête» n'est plus dictée par des motivations de foi ou de théologie). Voir également Meier 1991.

¹²⁵ Je renvoie par exemple au livre de F. Lotter sur saint Séverin du Norique (Lotter 1976) et aux discussions qu'il a soulevées.

¹²⁶ Sur les attestations d'Apollonius en dehors de Philostrate (Lucien de Samosate, Dio Cassius, probablement Porphyre), voir Petzke 1970:19–24. Il est vrai qu'aussi bien sur Apollonius que sur Jésus, ces témoignages précoces sont clairsemés et que les deux figures n'ont pas tout de suite retenu l'attention de leurs contemporains (*ibid.*, p. 157; Padilla 2001:149–150).

¹²⁷ Sur ces figures, voir Bastiaensen 1994:97–123, spéc.110–114.

¹²⁸ Bowie 1978 utilise ce terme: 1686.

et le héros philostrateen, les opinions ont toujours divergé, allant du scepticisme le plus prononcé (par ex. Ewen Lyall Bowie, dans le sillage d'Eduard Meyer)¹²⁹ à une confiance raisonnable (après F. Grosso, par ex. Graham Anderson et Andy M. Reimer, qui estiment qu'une source hagiographique peut dévoiler *something of the personalities and ethos of those involved* et qu'un ouvrage comme celui de Philostrate aurait également été concevable 150 ans plus tôt).¹³⁰

Tout dépend évidemment de la valeur qu'on accorde aux sources citées et utilisées par Philostrate lui-même, à commencer par les fameux Mémoires (ὑπομνήματα) de Damis de Ninive, le prétendu disciple et compagnon d'Apollonius (I 3 et *passim*). Est-ce un écrit authentique comme le croit toujours Anderson, ce qui transformerait tout d'un coup la *Vita Apollonii* d'une *Traditionslegende* en une *Ergebnislegende*?¹³¹ Ou un faux que des néopythagoriciens ont glissé entre les mains de Julia Domna et que Philostrate a éventuellement envisagé comme « vrai »?¹³² Ou plutôt, comme le pensent la plupart des spécialistes actuels, un truc littéraire de Philostrate (le thème du livre perdu et redécouvert) visant à authentifier son récit (il aurait alors impliqué le souvenir de l'impératrice).¹³³ Le problème, comme on l'a remarqué récemment, c'est qu'aucun témoignage hormis Philostrate ne nous garantit l'existence d'une source appelée Damis (ou circulant sous son nom), mais qu'en même temps les arguments forts manquent pour la nier; c'est donc une question de confiance qu'on accorde ou non à Philostrate.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Meyer 1917; Bowie 1978; Dzielska 1986.

¹³⁰ Anderson 1986:121; Id. 1994:22; Reimer 2002:21–22. Grosso 1954 était le plus optimiste quant à la valeur historique de la *Vita*. Pour un bref état de la question, voir Francis 1998:86–89.

¹³¹ Grosso 1954; Lo Cascio 1974:32–34,45; Anderson 1986:155–173 (l'auteur identifie Damis au philosophe épicurien dont parle Lucien de Samosate dans le *Iuppiter Tragoedus*; il aurait été un exorciste célèbre en Orient et se serait fâché avec Apollonius [cf. Origène, *Contra Celsum*, VI 41]).

¹³² Cf. dernièrement Flinterman 1995:79–88; Speyer 1974:49, n'excluait pas non plus cette hypothèse.

¹³³ Par ex. Bowie 1978:1663–1667, 1670–1671 (l'auteur suggère un lien avec Flavius Damien, sophiste et précepteur de Philostrate); Goulet 1981:176 (mais Damis reste une « source mystérieuse »); Dzielska 1986:19–49; Billault 1991:270 (note 12) (critique de la position d'Anderson); du Toit 1997:316; Hahn 2003:91.

¹³⁴ Padilla 2001:151. Giulia Sfameni Gasparro 1993:11–42, ici 21, plaide pour une attitude nuancée: «...sembra più prudente una via mediana che cerchi di riconoscere in essa (= la *Vita*), sulla base di altre complementari notizie, i tratti che, pur nel generale contesto apologetico, possono con buon fondamento ritenersi autentici di una personalità certo dotata di un consistente spessore ideologico e religioso». Cette position (comparable à celle de Moreschini 1990:44–50) me semble relever du bon

De toute façon, en dehors de Damis, l'auteur mentionne encore explicitement (I 3 et 12; III 41) un petit livre de Maxime d'Égées,¹³⁵ les quatre livres de Moeragénès sur Apollonius (dont il se démarque : voir *infra*),¹³⁶ puis des écrits d'Apollonius lui-même, en l'occurrence son *Testament* (I 3), ses *Lettres* (I 2 et *passim*), son *Apologie* (VIII 6), quatre livres *Sur la divination par les astres*, un traité *Sur les sacrifices* (III 41), et un livre contenant la *Doctrine de Pythagore* (VIII 19) que certains tendent à identifier à la *Vie de Pythagore* attribuée plus tard à Apollonius.¹³⁷ Dans ce cas-là, Philostrate aurait connu ce βίος, quitte à greffer bien de ses traits idéels de Pythagore sur Apollonius-lui-même.¹³⁸

Je ne rouvrirai pas ici la discussion sur l'authenticité de chacun de ces textes,¹³⁹ mais il est patent que Philostrate avait à sa disposition une certaine documentation écrite relative à Apollonius, qu'il a sans doute stratégiquement suraccentuée dans le cadre de sa « crédibilisation ». ¹⁴⁰ Comme il aime lui-même à le répéter,¹⁴¹ il a sélectionné ces matériaux en fonction de ses objectifs. Alain Billault a mis en relief cet aspect « réflexif » de son travail littéraire qui, au-delà d'un topique hagiographique connu (« la matière est immense, il faut faire des choix »),¹⁴² dégage l'image d'un écrivain qui recherche et atteint la maîtrise de son sujet. Il est possible, conclut-il, de prendre Philostrate au sérieux lorsqu'il se présente comme un biographe documenté (I 2).¹⁴³

sens et n'empêche pas de prendre en compte les multiples imprécisions et erreurs que contient la *Vita Apollonii* (Koskenniemi 1994:78–83, en analyse trois : le voyage d'Apollonius en Inde, sa signification dans la politique internationale de son temps et la lutte entre Démétrius et Néron).

¹³⁵ Voir Graf 1984–1985, qui défend l'authenticité de cet ouvrage (sur la jeunesse d'Apollonius ?), écrit entre Trajan et Caracalla.

¹³⁶ Origène connaît cet ouvrage (*Contra Celsum*, VI41), dont subsiste peut-être un fragment (cf. Bowie 1978:1677).

¹³⁷ Sur cette question (cf. Porphyre, Jamblique, Souda), voir Petzke 1970:37–40.

¹³⁸ Cf. Mumprecht 1983:1105–1106n67.

¹³⁹ Ainsi, le fragment du περὶ θυσιῶν (Eusèbe, *Praep. Evang.*, IV 13) est sans doute authentique, et peut-être aussi certaines des nombreuses lettres attribuées à Apollonius dans et en dehors de la *Vita* (voir Petzke 1970:36–37, 40–45). Pour les sources dans leur ensemble, je renvoie aux références bibliographiques signalées par Hägg 2004:388–389 + notes.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* : 389–390 (Hägg utilise le terme allemand *Beglaubigungsapparat*). Moreschini 1990:47–49 souligne, quant à lui, la concordance entre le fragment du περὶ θυσιῶν cité par Eusèbe et ce que dit Philostrate sur les sacrifices.

¹⁴¹ Nombreuses références textuelles de telles justifications chez Billault 1993a:273 (note 5).

¹⁴² Cf. Festugière 1960:123–152, ici 132–133 (voir déjà *Jn* 21:25).

¹⁴³ Billault 1993a:273, 275.

Philostrate a beaucoup voyagé (il a sans doute accompagné Julia Domna, Septime Sévère et Caracalla lors de leurs périples)¹⁴⁴ et il a partout recueilli des récits merveilleux sur Apollonius (VIII 31), notamment dans les villes où il était aimé et dans les sanctuaires dont il restaura les rites tombés en désuétude (I 2). Aux antécédents écrits s'ajoute donc toute une tradition orale, souvent locale, dans laquelle Philostrate puise régulièrement au cours de sa narration.¹⁴⁵

Tout saint est un saint construit en plusieurs étapes. Cela vaut aussi pour Apollonius comme pour Jésus. Les étapes de la stylisation hagiographique (la triple métamorphose des faits bruts par le personnage lui-même, par la tradition ultérieure et, *in fine*, par l'auteur) sont difficiles à démêler ou à délimiter et donc sujettes à discussion, mais elles doivent être prises en compte.¹⁴⁶ Je suis d'accord avec Wolfgang Speyer, Thomas Hägg (qui parle de *historical identity* et de *constructed identities*) et Johannes Hahn (qui utilise lui-même le terme *Stilisierung*) pour estimer que l'Apollonius historique a vécu au premier siècle en Cappadoce et en Cilicie, qu'il fut un adepte de la philosophie et du mode de vie de Pythagore, qu'il avait la réputation d'être doué de pouvoirs surnaturels (comme magicien ou thaumaturge) et qu'à ce titre il attirait des disciples.¹⁴⁷ Son pythagorisme a sans doute déjà déterminé une certaine conscience de sa « mission » (Hahn parle du *Selbstverständnis des historischen Apollonius*, déductible aussi de son περὶ θυσιῶν),¹⁴⁸ mais sa « figure » a été largement absorbée, amplifiée et infléchie par la légende, avant d'être fixée littérairement par Philostrate (et déjà ses prédécesseurs). Henning Paulsen admet que l'apport littéraire est plus marqué chez Philostrate—un véritable écrivain (ce que sera aussi maint hagiographe chrétien)—que chez les évangélistes.¹⁴⁹ Pourtant, le rôle de ces derniers a été remis en valeur par la recherche récente, qui les considère comme des théologiens et non plus uniquement comme des

¹⁴⁴ Mumprecht 1983:1108n.89.

¹⁴⁵ Voir Dzielska 1986:51–84 (sur les traditions locales); Koskenniemi 1994:177; Billault 1993a:275–276 (l'auteur souligne l'implication personnelle de Philostrate); Hahn 2003:94 (avec les passages textuels dans la note 27).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Koskenniemi 1994:188: « Die VA vermittelt also zweifellos historisch zuverlässige Kenntnisse über Apollonius, aber es ist schwer zu entscheiden, wie weit das vorhandene Material glaubwürdig ist ». Cet auteur ne refuse pas une comparaison avec les Évangiles, mais reste tout de même méfiant à cet égard (p. 189; voir aussi *supra*, note 123).

¹⁴⁷ Speyer 1974:47; Hägg 2004:3, 20–23; Hahn 2003:89–90, 96–97.

¹⁴⁸ Hahn 2003:96; voir aussi Moreschini 1990:49.

¹⁴⁹ Paulsen 1997:233.

« rassembleurs » de matériaux préexistants.¹⁵⁰ Elle tend même à resituer les Évangiles dans le cadre de la biographie gréco-romaine.¹⁵¹

On a déjà remarqué qu'une source hagiographique reflète *d'abord* l'univers mental de l'auteur et de son époque (et donc aussi de son environnement littéraire qui, pour Philostrate, est la seconde sophistique). Je reviendrai sur certaines interprétations de la *Vita Apollonii*, que James Francis a qualifiée de *truthful fiction* en l'inscrivant dans la réécriture de l'histoire (*rewriting the past*) propre aussi à l'historiographie antique.¹⁵² Je laisse de côté ici quelques problèmes spécifiques d'« historicité versus *Literarisierung* » tels que les contacts d'Apollonius avec les « bons » et « mauvais » empereurs, où Philostrate semble surtout songer à un message pour son propre temps,¹⁵³ ou encore l'itinérance d'Apollonius. Ces multiples voyages en dehors du monde grec, John Elsner les a interprétés, dans un article intitulé *Hagiographic geography*, comme des allégories reflétant le progrès spirituel du héros¹⁵⁴ (on pourrait les comparer alors aux déplacements de saint Antoine dans ce qu'on a appelé une « biographie ascendante » ou *Aufstiegsbiographie* écrite par Athanase d'Alexandrie).¹⁵⁵ C'est une hypothèse intéressante, mais la possibilité factuelle de tels voyages ne saurait être exclue a priori.¹⁵⁶

J'ajoute seulement que dans le Nouveau Testament et dans l'hagiographie chrétienne, la stylisation (peut être déjà en partie inchoative dans l'autoconscience de Jésus et de certains saints) fait un ample usage de l'accomplissement (πλήρωμα) et de la (ré)actualisation de l'Écriture, avec aussi des typologies (Jésus ou le saint comme le nouveau Moïse par exemple),¹⁵⁷ des imitations (l'*imitatio Christi* est essentielle dans l'hagiographie), des comparaisons, des justifications, et l'expression d'idées moyennant des paroles bibliques.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Koskeniemi 1994:187.

¹⁵¹ Par ex. Shuler 1982; Burridge 1992; Frickenschmidt 1997.

¹⁵² Francis 1998:421.

¹⁵³ Cf. Koskeniemi 1994:185. Sur les problèmes de chronologie et d'anachronisme au regard du I^{er} siècle, voir par ex. Bowie 1978 *passim*; Anderson 1986:175–184.

¹⁵⁴ Elsner 1997.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Holl 1927:249–269, spéc.252–254.

¹⁵⁶ Sur cette question (et notamment le voyage en Inde), voir Hägg 2004:399–400 (avec d'autres références bibliographiques). Sur les voyages, voir encore Jones 2001; Pouderon 2005; Morgan 2007; Roy 2007.

¹⁵⁷ Voir déjà Jn 3:14.

¹⁵⁸ Cette intertextualité biblique caractérise évidemment déjà les Vies de patriarches de Philon. Pour l'hagiographie chrétienne, voir Van Uytanghe 1985:565–611.

De la même manière, et à côté de l'évidente *imitatio Pythagorae*, Philostrate ancre sa *Vie d'Apollonius* dans la littérature et la mythologie grecques. Par exemple, après la résurrection d'une jeune fille à Rome: «et la jeune fille prit la parole et revint dans la maison de son père, comme Alceste ressuscitée par Héraclès» (IV 45). Arrivé aux frontières de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie, Apollonius se montre critique envers les commerçants grecs (IV 2) et conclut en paraphrasant Hésiode: «Que tout serait bien, si la richesse était moins honorée et si l'égalité était plus pratiquée et si le fer, abandonné, noircissait. Alors, les hommes n'auraient qu'une même pensée et la terre entière ne serait plus qu'une patrie.»¹⁵⁹ Quand il justifie son intention de parler philosophie à ses codétenus à l'esprit abattu (VII 22), il rappelle les vers de l'Odyssée où Hélène mêla au vin dans un cratère des drogues d'Égypte, pour calmer les souffrances dans l'âme des héros.¹⁶⁰ Avant la disparition du tribunal de Domitien, c'est la parole d'Apollon poursuivie par Achille qui s'accomplit (VIII 5): «car tu ne saurais me tuer, puisque je ne suis point mortel». La liste de ce genre de citations et de réminiscences dans la *Vita* est longue.¹⁶¹ Je rappelle, par ailleurs, que dans les éloges funèbres et les panégyriques, les συγκρίσεις étaient toujours de mise, avec des personnages célèbres de la littérature classique chez les païens, avec des figures bibliques chez les chrétiens (notamment dans les oraisons pour les martyrs).¹⁶²

3) La troisième composante concerne la fonction et l'objectif du discours hagiographique. Ce dernier suppose une fonction de l'énoncé plus «performative» qu'informative. Il poursuit des objectifs tels que l'apologie (éventuellement par opposition à une autre image, fausse, du héros), l'idéalisation du personnage (en faveur duquel on veut susciter l'admiration, voire la vénération), l'instruction et l'édification des autres moyennant la pensée, le comportement et l'action exemplaires, et l'enseignement du protagoniste, qui illustre et incarne un idéal de vie à imiter ou du moins digne de s'en inspirer. Ainsi—je le répète—,

¹⁵⁹ Hésiode, *Erga*, v. 153 (citation un peu modifiée).

¹⁶⁰ Homère, *Od.*, IV, 219 et suiv. Suite de VII 22: «...je suis d'avis qu'Hélène, qui avait appris la science égyptienne, prononça sur le cratère des incantations destinées à consoler le désespoir, et qu'elle guérit ces hommes à la fois avec des mots magiques et du vin».

¹⁶¹ *Ilias*, XXII 13. Pour d'autres exemples (très nombreux), je renvoie aux *Erläuterungen* dans Mumprecht 1983:1023–1109. Pour ce qui est des nombreuses réminiscences à la fois explicites et implicites de Pythagore (le modèle primaire, mais finalement surpassé), elles ont été réunies et commentées par Billault 2000:115–118.

¹⁶² Cf. Delehay 1966²:47.

dans les Vies des saints chrétiens, l'imitation est un facteur essentiel, en amont et en aval : eux ils imitent le Christ (fût-ce avec beaucoup d'infléchissements postbibliques)¹⁶³ et cette imitation actualisée est exemplifiée pour les lecteurs et les auditeurs.

Philostrate, de son côté, informe beaucoup, il veut faire connaître la vie d'Apollonius à ceux qui l'ignorent (V 39), et il fait quantité de digressions sur toutes sortes de sujets. Toutefois, comme l'écrit Alain Billault, son véritable dessein exclut la neutralité. S'il ne se prive d'aucune forme de séduction littéraire, c'est en fonction de sa visée édifiante.¹⁶⁴ Ce but, il l'affirme dès le début du premier livre : servir à la gloire (τιμή) de l'homme qui en fait l'objet et à l'utilité (ὠφέλεια) de ceux qui aiment apprendre (I 3). À la fin du dernier livre, Philostrate commente l'oracle qu'Apollonius a rendu au jeune homme incrédule sur les destinées de l'âme : son héros a voulu que, pleins de confiance (εὐθυμοί) et dans la connaissance de notre propre nature, nous continuions notre route vers le but que nous assignent les Parques (VIII 31). C'est un chemin de vie menant à l'immortalité bienheureuse qui est esquissée ici.¹⁶⁵

Le premier aspect—magnifier la figure d'Apollonius—suppose la sélectivité de l'énoncé (voir déjà *supra*), mais il s'agit d'une sélection tendancieuse. Comme les évangélistes et les auteurs de Vies de saints, Philostrate ne retient que le positif. C'est là que réside la grande différence entre une biographie et une biographie spirituelle (ou hagiographie). Plutarque par exemple, même dans ses portraits les plus élogieux, ne cache pas certaines taches. Il en va de même pour les philosophes présentés par Diogène Laërce¹⁶⁶ ou par Philostrate lui-même dans ses Βίοι σοφιστῶν. Ici, en revanche, c'est le parti pris laudatif, encomiastique,¹⁶⁷ destiné à célébrer Apollonius comme une personnalité absolument extraordinaire, comme le nouveau Pythagore, le sage parfait, le *superman's superman* (Graham Anderson),¹⁶⁸ qui connaît la vérité sur

¹⁶³ Voir Van Uytanghe 1985:601–605 (un exemple est le développement de l'ascétisme).

¹⁶⁴ Billault 1991:274 ; Id. 1993:277 ; Hägg 2004:399. Suggérer le contraire, à savoir que la *Vita Apollonii* ne serait qu'une pièce de divertissement sophistique (cf. Reardon 1971:190, 266) et que le « romancier » Philostrate ne voulait pas être trop pris au sérieux (Bowie 1978:1653–1654 ; Dzielska 1986:28), me semble méconnaître la portée d'une telle oeuvre.

¹⁶⁵ Goulet 1981:182.

¹⁶⁶ Qui n'est donc pas un « hagiographe » : voir *supra*, note 77.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Paulsen 2003:101. Sur cet aspect, encore renforcé dans la biographie spirituelle chrétienne, voir aussi Van Uytanghe 2005:223–248, spéc.231–232, 241.

¹⁶⁸ Anderson 1986:136.

tous les sujets¹⁶⁹ et dont la supériorité ressort, notamment, de ses monologues devant ses auditeurs et de ses dialogues avec les représentants des écoles philosophiques et du savoir sacré (brahmanes, gymnosophistes), tout comme de ses pouvoirs surnaturels.¹⁷⁰ Si Apollonius venait à être tué, la philosophie subirait une grave défaite en la personne du meilleur philosophe qui soit au monde (VII 13; citation de Damis). Bref, «notre sophiste a accumulé sur son héros tout ce qui lui a paru convenir à un homme incomparable».¹⁷¹

S'il est question de défauts, c'est pour en faire des calomnies. Philostrate fait constamment de l'apologie et de la réhabilitation, surtout pour montrer qu'Apollonius ne fut pas un magicien (γόνς) (par ex. I 2; V 12; VII 39; VIII 3 et 7), comme le prétendaient ses détracteurs.¹⁷² Parmi ceux-ci, on range généralement aussi Moeragénès, «qui a ignoré beaucoup de choses sur Apollonius» (I 3). On a supposé également que Moeragénès n'était pas forcément hostile à Apollonius, mais qu'aux yeux de Philostrate, il le célébrait trop comme φιλόσοφος *et* μάγος (un mot neutre, tandis qu'un γόνς est plutôt un charlatan),¹⁷³ alors que Philostrate aurait voulu privilégier le seul φιλόσοφος, le pythagoricien ascétique.¹⁷⁴ Quoi qu'il en soit,¹⁷⁵ la tendance apologétique porte sur d'autres aspects encore, par exemple la chasteté d'Apollonius (I 13), son attitude face à Néron (VII 4)¹⁷⁶ et Domitien (VII 35), son prétendu

¹⁶⁹ Billault 2000:121.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Hahn 2003:94–95: «Die umfangreiche Rezeption zahlreicher literarischer wie philosophischer, religiöser und auch volkstümlicher Vorstellungsmuster von ausserordentlicher, ja mit übermenschlichen Wissen und Fähigkeiten begabten Persönlichkeiten—seien sie charismatische Weise, Propheten oder Wundermänner—markiert die Apollonius-Schrift des Philostrat als bemerkenswerten Spiegel und Element einer lebendigen zeitgenössischen Diskurses über den vollendeten Weisen in seinem Verhältnis zu seinem Mittmenschen und zur göttlichen Sphäre—ein Diskurs, der sich nicht zufällig im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert angesichts zunehmender religiöser Orientierungslosigkeit und spiritueller Verunsicherung ausserordentlich intensivierte».

¹⁷¹ Lagrange 1937:15.

¹⁷² Cf. Lucien de Samosate, *Alexander sive Pseudomantis*, 5 (sur le contexte, à savoir des cercles philosophiques qui, vers 180, polémiqueaient contre des «charismatiques» douteux et des charlatans, voir Hahn 2003:91–92); ensuite aussi Dio Cassius, *Hist. Rom.*, 77, 18,4; Origène, *Contra Celsum*, VI 41.

¹⁷³ Origène, citant Moeragénès, utilise les termes μάγος et φιλόσοφος, puis γόνς (aux yeux de certains, dit-il).

¹⁷⁴ Raynor 1984.

¹⁷⁵ Relevons encore que la tendance à opposer le vrai miracle à la magie est commune à la *Vita Apollonii* et aux Actes des apôtres: voir Reimer 2002.

¹⁷⁶ Ici, Philostrate semble tout de même relativiser quelque peu l'«héroïsme» de ce qu'il a raconté sur Apollonius au temps de Néron: ce n'était qu'un «prélude» à sa résistance à Domitien.

ressentiment contre les hommes publics (VIII 22), sans parler des apologies que l'auteur met dans la bouche ou sous la plume du héros lui-même, par exemple sur son choix du pythagorisme (VI 11) et, surtout, la défense qu'il avait préparée pour sa comparution devant Domitien (VIII 7). Le *holy man* calomnié,¹⁷⁷ c'est aussi un thème chrétien, que ce soit dans les Évangiles (cf. les exorcismes de Jésus ou sa fréquentation des pécheurs)¹⁷⁸ ou dans l'hagiographie (Jérôme et Sulpice Sévère par exemple s'attaquent avec virulence aux contempteurs de leurs saints (Paul, Hilarion, Martin)).¹⁷⁹

L'Apollonius de Philostrate réalise en lui la somme de tous les archétypes de la sagesse païenne connue à l'époque de la seconde sophistique. Tout en ne faisant pas lui-même explicitement profession de foi (néo)pythagoricienne (pas plus qu'Athanase, biographe d'Antoine, ne professa lui-même la vie monastique),¹⁸⁰ Philostrate accorde la primauté au pythagorisme, respectant par là sans doute l'histoire d'Apollonius (voir *supra*), mais la conformant au cadre interprétatif du néopythagorisme tel qu'il avait évolué au début du III^e siècle.¹⁸¹ De la sorte, il dépeint son héros comme le modèle absolu de sagesse et de spiritualité païennes, avec même une révolution éthique par rapport à Socrate, en ce sens que le précepte recommandé n'est plus de se connaître soi-même, mais de connaître les autres (ce qui a pour conséquence de substituer le voyage à la sédentarité).¹⁸²

C'est dans cette vie exemplaire dont le lecteur doit ressentir l'appel, c'est-à-dire l'invitation à une conversion philosophique, que consiste l'ὠφέλεια (le second aspect, à côté de la τιμή).¹⁸³ Le lecteur ne peut prétendre aux mêmes prouesses, mais il peut aspirer à la perfection

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Paulsen 2003:117: «Sie alle (= die θεῖοι ἄνδρες) überragten durch ihre Persönlichkeit ihre Umwelt so sehr, dass sich ebenso begeisterte Anhänger um sie scharten, wie grimmige Gegner sie zu Lebzeiten oder postum verfolgten»; Boulogne 1998:301–302 («Un homme calomnié et persecuté»).

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Mt 12:22–30; Mc 3:20–30; Lc 11:14–23 (voir aussi le livre de Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, London 1978); Mt 9:10–13; Mc 2:15–17; Lc 5:29–32.

¹⁷⁹ Jérôme, *Vita Hilarionis*, éd. Bastiaensen & Smit 1975:1, 6–7; Sulpice, *Epist.*, 1 (Fontaine 1967).

¹⁸⁰ Même s'il s'est réfugié quelque temps chez les moines d'Égypte.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Billault 1993a:277; Hahn 2003:92; Hägg 2004:400: «... we have no reason to doubt that he (sc. Apollonius) did somehow appear as a follower of Pythagoras; only Pythagorism was not the same in the first as in the third century» (déjà le fragment du Περὶ Θυσιῶν et quelques lettres attribuées à Apollonius font penser à un pythagorisme proche du moyen platonisme). Sur ces développements philosophiques, voir Swain 1999b:163–178.

¹⁸² Boulogne 1999:309–310.

¹⁸³ Cf. Goulet 1981:183; Billault 1991:267.

spirituelle qui les rend possibles et qu'il peut atteindre par les moyens indiqués par Apollonius (par ex. I 8, VIII 7). «C'est une question de diététique, de mode de vie, d'emploi du temps, d'ascèse qui garde pur l'éther de l'âme et permet la connaissance pénétrante des choses et le contact avec les dieux».¹⁸⁴ Modèle à contempler donc (les aventures d'Apollonius, ses paroles, ses actes et ses prodiges, objets d'émerveillement et d'admiration), mais aussi modèle à imiter,¹⁸⁵ c'est-à-dire des exemples à suivre et des leçons à retenir. Les exemples proviennent également de tiers loués par Apollonius (les brahmanes notamment [III 51] ou son guide égyptien Timasion qu'il appelait le nouvel Hippolyte [VI 3]). Les leçons, on peut les tirer encore des préceptes, recommandations et remontrances d'Apollonius,¹⁸⁶ qui font de lui le redresseur de toutes les erreurs fatales à l'humain (il corrige les prêtres, fustige les cités aux mœurs dépravées, il multiplie les conseils aux bons empereurs et résiste aux mauvais).¹⁸⁷

Bref, le dessein protreptique, pédagogique, voire missionnaire,¹⁸⁸ de la *Vita Apollonii* érige son héros en nouvel éducateur de l'humanité.¹⁸⁹ L'audience visée par Philostrate est sans doute plus élitaires que celle qu'ont en vue les évangélistes ou les hagiographes,¹⁹⁰ mais le principe performatif est le même. Par ailleurs, les Vies monastiques, comme celle de saint Antoine, s'adresseront elles aussi en premier lieu à une élite spirituelle qui se croyait détentrice de la *vera philosophia*.¹⁹¹

4) La stylisation élogieuse et performative se fait à l'aide d'un éventail d'«archétypes de stylisation» (Jacques Fontaine), dont on retrouve au moins quelques-uns dans toute biographie spirituelle. Ludwig Bieler les a réunis pour faire le portrait du θεῖος ἄνθρωπος, dont il faut évidemment prendre en compte les différenciations et les variations. Mais la critique

¹⁸⁴ Billault 1991:273.

¹⁸⁵ Id. 2000:125.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Hahn 2003: «... Zunächst ist hervorzuhaben, dass der philostratische Apollonius eine eminent öffentliche Figur ist, die unermüdlich tätig ist, das Wort ergreift, interveniert, mahnt und lehrt».

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Paulsen 2003:103.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Goulet 1981:182 (renvoi aux professions de foi d'Apollonius devant le roi des Perses, les sages d'Égypte ou l'empereur Domitien); Boulogne 1999:307 (Apollonius veut gagner le monde entier à son système axiologique).

¹⁸⁹ Boulogne 1999:306.

¹⁹⁰ Philostrate voulait sans doute être lu par beaucoup de personnes (Hägg 2004:390–391), alors que les Passions et Vies chrétiennes finiront aussi par être récitées devant un public d'*auditeurs* dans un contexte liturgique.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Penco 1960:79–93.

sémantique du concept de θεῖος ἄνθρωπος (voir *supra*) ne change rien au minimum de cohérence et de continuité (avec ou sans dépendances) que ces archétypes, à travers leurs variantes et leur concrétisations individuelles dans les textes, confèrent à l'« homme saint » de traditions diverses. Grosso modo, selon Michel de Certeau, le discours hagiographique est un discours de vertu et de surnaturel.¹⁹²

Bien des qualités studieuses et vertueuses, tout comme la beauté physique, Apollonius les possédait déjà avant (I 7) et peu après (I 11) sa conversion au pythagorisme.¹⁹³ Elles se dégagent, tout au long de la biographie (où il restera toujours semblable à lui-même [VII 35; VII 34; VIII 7.9]),¹⁹⁴ de son mode de vie et de son enseignement (y compris l'éloge de tiers ou les réponses faites à des tiers), comme dans la plupart des textes comparables (Vies de philosophes, Évangiles, Vies de saints), caractérisés par l'alternance de la *narrativa* avec des discours et dialogues (reproduits comme s'ils avaient été « enregistrés », à l'instar, somme toute, de l'historiographie antique).

Apollonius aime la καλοκάγαθία, dit-il au gouverneur de Cilicie, et cela lui a valu d'être l'hôte d'Asklépios (I 12). Les vertus de sagesse, de justice, de force, de maîtrise de soi, de bravoure et de discipline, il les apporta comme droit d'entrée en Mésopotamie (I 20). Ensuite, les ἀρεταί furent ses seuls présents pour le roi de Babylone (I 28). Plus tard, les vertus feront l'objet de ses διαλέξεις (par ex. IV 31, à Olympie).

On a déjà largement évoqué la sagesse d'Apollonius. Mais une de ses vertus primordiales (comme de tout saint) est la piété, ici dans le contexte du polythéisme païen. Elle est universelle, en ce sens qu'elle s'adresse à tous les dieux, temples et oracles (IV 40),¹⁹⁵ même si Philostrate, peut-être pour faire plaisir à Julia Domna, souligne spécialement la dévotion de son héros pour le dieu Soleil (I 31; VI 4 et 10; VII 10 et 31; VIII 13).¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² de Certeau 1968:207–209.

¹⁹³ Voir aussi *supra*, note 15 : ses sages discours dans le temple d'Égées et le parallèle avec l'Évangile de Luc.

¹⁹⁴ Y compris sa beauté physique (IV 1; VIII 29), qui est souvent un signe de sainteté. La constance en tout sera aussi l'apanage de maint saint chrétien, par ex. Sulpice Sévère, *Vita Martini* (op. cit. [note 116] 10,1) : *Idem enim constantissime perseverabat qui prius fuerat*.

¹⁹⁵ Y compris aux « dieux inconnus » d'Athènes, d'après son éloge de Timasion (VI 3) : voir *supra*, note 25.

¹⁹⁶ Sur cette question, voir Hahn 2003:97 (avec références bibliographiques dans la note 38) ; Koskeniemi 1994:185–186 (cet auteur souligne néanmoins que Julia Domna se montrait *überraschend vorsichtig* vis-à-vis du culte d'Hélios et qualifie Philostrate de *religiös passiv bzw. widersprüchlich*).

Mais il souligne autant son respect plus général des rites et sacrifices corrects (non sanglants évidemment: cf. I 31; VI 11 et 25; VIII 7.10),¹⁹⁷ sa piété funéraire (sur les tombeaux des héros de la guerre de Troie: cf. IV 11–13), sa volonté de faire passer les dieux avant un roi terrestre (I 36),¹⁹⁸ son mépris pour le trafic de leurs statues (V 20).

Un autre élément commun aux philosophes et aux saints est le détachement par rapport aux choses matérielles, aux richesses (I 38: «de la paille»), l'héritage personnel y inclus (I 13),¹⁹⁹ l'indifférence totale au luxe (des palais) (I 21; IV 42; VII 31) d'un homme d'aspect misérable, qui a toute la terre comme patrie (I 21) et qui demande aux dieux de faire qu'il ne sente le besoin de rien (I 34), qui blâme la cupidité (notamment celle de son ennemi Euphratès) et les pratiques malhonnêtes (V 38; VI 2 et 41; VII 23).

L'ascétisme d'Apollonius (encore un trait de l'homme saint) est surtout (néo)pythagoricien (silence, végétarisme, austérité en tout). Je passe sur les ressemblances et les différences (également de motivation) avec l'ascèse chrétienne,²⁰⁰ mais la très forte mise en exergue de la chasteté comme domptage (quasi monastique) de la chair (I 13; VI 42) et la condamnation de la débauche, de la licence, de la passion et de la mollesse (I 12 et 24; IV 2; VII 42)²⁰¹ méritent l'attention, même si l'ouvrage atteste la permanence, au temps de Philostrate, de la bisexualité antique.²⁰²

Correcteur sévère s'il le faut, l'homme divin, comme l'homme de Dieu, est aussi un bienfaiteur. Philostrate termine ainsi le livre VI: «Telles furent les actions accomplies par notre héros en faveur des temples et des cités, tels furent ses discours adressés aux différents peuples et dans l'intérêt de ceux-ci, voilà ce qu'il fit pour les morts ou

¹⁹⁷ Par ailleurs, Apollonius s'opposait aussi fermement aux spectacles sanglants à Athènes (IV 22).

¹⁹⁸ Quand le roi Vardanès de Babylone le fait appeler, il n'y va pas avant d'avoir achevé son sacrifice et ses prières.

¹⁹⁹ Apollonius le partagea avec son frère et ses autres parents et ne se réserva que fort peu de choses. À comparer: Athanase, *Vita Antonii* Bartelink 1994:2, 4–5 (ici, ce sont surtout les gens du village et les pauvres qui en profitent, à l'exception d'une petite réserve pour la soeur du saint; en plus, la motivation est explicitement biblique).

²⁰⁰ Voir par ex. Meredith 1976:313–332.

²⁰¹ VII 42: éloge d'un jeune homme victime de sa chasteté.

²⁰² Apollonius, sous la plume de Philostrate, fustige certaines mœurs efféminées, mais régulièrement il présente comme allant de soi la double face d'Eros (par ex. VI 11: l'exemple du bel adolescent dans le discours d'Apollonius aux gymnosophistes; VIII 7: les jeunes gens et leurs amants ou hétaires), ce qui relativise peut-être la théorie de la problématisation chère à Michel Foucault.

les malades, ce qu'il dit aux sages et à ceux qui ne l'étaient point, et aux rois qui lui demandaient de les conseiller sur la voie de la vertu » (VI 43). Cette bienfaisance d'Apollonius s'accompagne plus d'une fois d'un sens de la justice (II 39; VI 21) et d'une attitude clément et compatissante, par exemple au profit des habitants affamés d'Aspendos en Pamphilie (I 15),²⁰³ d'un eunuque du roi Vardanès, pris en flagrant délit (I 36), de ses disciples qui étaient partis par crainte de Néron (IV 38) et, plus tard, de ses codétenus à Rome (VII 26). Parallèlement, Apollonius insiste beaucoup sur le devoir de l'entraide mutuelle (IV 3: comparaison avec les moineaux) et de la concorde entre citoyens (VI 38: à Antioche).²⁰⁴

Le bienfait est parfois accordé sous forme de miracle, l'autre ingrédient du portrait hagiographique (voir déjà *supra*).²⁰⁵ Apollonius ressuscite une jeune fille (IV 45) et il guérit des malades, soit en rapport avec les cures d'Asklépios (I 9; IV 11),²⁰⁶ soit plus personnellement (VI 40; VI 43).²⁰⁷ Il exorcisa des possédés (IV 20)²⁰⁸ et rendit inoffensifs démons, empuses et satyres (II 4; IV 10, 20 et 25; VI 27).²⁰⁹ Dans la *Vita*, des exorcismes et des guérisons sont également attribués à des sages indiens qu'Apollonius visita (III 38–40).²¹⁰ Apollonius lui-même arrêta encore les tremblements de terre qui agitaient les villes situées sur la rive gauche de l'Hellespont, grâce aux sacrifices équitables qu'il leur imposa (VI 41).²¹¹ Les gens croyaient être en sécurité en s'embarquant

²⁰³ Ce fut pendant ses cinq années de silence.

²⁰⁴ Le gouverneur de Syrie y avait semé la discorde, lorsqu'un tremblement de terre survint, qu'Apollonius interpréta comme un avertissement de Zeus.

²⁰⁵ Pour la difficile question de la définition, du nombre et de la classification des miracles dans la *Vita Apollonii*, voir Padilla 1991:33–40.

²⁰⁶ Dans I 9, Asklépios lui-même avait ordonné (en songe) à un jeune Assyrien hydropique d'aller s'entretenir avec Apollonius.

²⁰⁷ VI 40: il ramène à la raison un jeune homme amoureux de la Vénus de Cnide; VI 43: il guérit de la morsure d'un chien enragé un enfant en qui était passé l'âme de Télèphe le Mysien, puis le chien lui-même, qui lui obéit (cf. *supra*, note 88).

²⁰⁸ Dans IV 20, il s'agit d'une véritable délivrance d'un énergemène (un jeune Athénien au comportement extravagant). Le récit rappelle le Nouveau Testament mais aussi les *Acta Petri cum Simone* apocryphes (le démon chassé renverse une statue): cf. Mumprecht 1983:1071 (n. 55). À noter aussi que le jeune homme délivré embrasse le genre de vie d'Apollonius.

²⁰⁹ Dans VI 27, Apollonius guérit et ramène à la continence un satyre qui se ruait sur les femmes d'un petit bourg de l'Éthiopie.

²¹⁰ III 38: exorcisme de l'enfant d'une pauvre Indienne par le biais d'une lettre adressée au démon (voir aussi *supra*, note 8: ressemblances avec le Nouveau Testament); III 39–40: guérisons, notamment grâce à la « science » et les conseils de Iarchas.

²¹¹ Des sacrifices « équitables », c'est-à-dire conformes aux ressources des villes, qui risquaient d'être dupés par des charlatans véreux.

ensemble avec lui, car ils étaient convaincus qu'il commandait aux puissances de la nature, notamment à la tempête et au feu (IV 13).

Ce trait-là doit cependant attirer notre attention sur un autre constat relatif aux miracles dans la *Vie d'Apollonius*: les miracles réflexifs (qui arrivent au saint ou dont il fait l'objet) y manifestent beaucoup plus le surnaturel et le merveilleux que les miracles dits transitifs (qui se font pour aider ou éventuellement punir d'autres personnes).²¹² Certes, ces miracles réflexifs peuvent profiter (ou nuire) à des tiers, mais là n'est pas leur fonction principale. Ils découlent notamment du don permettant de franchir les limites de la connaissance et de l'expérience.

Apollonius comprend le langage des animaux (I 20).²¹³ ainsi que des langues étrangères, sans les avoir apprises (I 19). Comme les brahmanes, il a une connaissance extraordinaire du passé (III 23–24; VI 11),²¹⁴ du présent et surtout de l'avenir (sa πρόγνωσις, qui n'est pas le produit de la magie, mais d'une âme pure (III 42: c'est Iarchas qui dit cela) et de la diététique pythagoricienne (VI 11; VIII 7).²¹⁵ Il sait et prévoit tout δαίμονιως et ne court donc personnellement aucun danger (VII 10, 14 et 38; VIII 13). Il sait qui est vertueux (VI 3: la chasteté de Timasion) ou innocent (V 24: le brigand qu'il sauve de la mort) ou victime d'un homicide involontaire (VI 5).²¹⁶ Il démasque des coupables (I 10: un sacrificateur [d'Asklépios] impur; I 15: les riches qui cachent le blé;²¹⁷ IV 26: un parricide; VII 27 et 36: les espions de Domitien dans la prison). Dans sa clairvoyance, il reconnaît les âmes qui ont transmigré (V 42; VI 43),²¹⁸ il sait que le temple de Jupiter Capitolin a été incendié (V 30)²¹⁹ et voit à distance (à Éphèse en l'occurrence) l'assassinat de Domitien à Rome (VIII 26). Les choses qu'il prévoit ou prédit sont très

²¹² Sur cette distinction, voir Flusin 1981:299–313; ici 305.

²¹³ Il apprit ce secret en voyageant parmi les Arabes.

²¹⁴ Dans III 23–24, aussi bien Iarchas, chef des brahmanes, qu'Apollonius lui-même savent ce qu'Apollonius a été dans une vie antérieure.

²¹⁵ VI 11 (à Thespésion, chef des gymnosophistes): « Comme vous serez pur (= en suivant Pythagore), je vous donnerai la science de l'avenir... ».

²¹⁶ Apollonius purifie un homme habillé à la mode de Memphis et coupable d'un homicide involontaire. À tort, les gymnosophistes ne l'avaient pas encore purifié, car (c'est ce que dévoila Apollonius) la victime, un certain Philisque, descendait de l'Égyptien Thamus, qui ravagea autrefois le pays des gymnosophistes.

²¹⁷ Cf. *supra*, note 203.

²¹⁸ V 42: récit du lion apprivoisé, à Alexandrie, en qui était passée l'âme du roi égyptien Amasis; VI 43: voir *supra*, note 207.

²¹⁹ Il dévoile cela devant Vespasien en s'adressant au dieu suprême lui-même. Selon Apollonius, il combattait à Vespasien de restaurer le temple, brûlé par Vitellius et ses partisans, assiégés eux-mêmes dans le Capitole par Domitien, fils de Vespasien.

nombreuses; je me limite ici aux catastrophes naturelles (IV 4: la peste à Éphèse; IV 6: tremblement de terre dans plusieurs villes ioniennes; VII 41: une tempête sur la mer Tyrrhénienne) et au règne des empereurs (avènement, fin, vicissitudes).²²⁰

Du merveilleux réflexif relèvent aussi les songes ou visions que les dieux lui envoient (I 23; IV 34), l'apparition d'Achille à Apollonius (IV 16), sa capacité de défaire ses liens (VII 38; aussi VIII 30),²²¹ sa disparition miraculeuse du tribunal de Domitien (VIII 5), puis son ubiquité (semblable à celle de Pythagore [IV 10; VIII 10])²²² et ses réapparitions (III 11–13: à Démétrius et Damis; VIII 19: sortie merveilleuse de l'autel de Trophonius), les traditions relatives à sa mort et son « ascension » (VIII 30; voir *supra*: le Christ, mais aussi Élie, et Moïse chez Philon),²²³ son apparition au jeune homme incrédule (VIII 30: voir aussi *supra*). N'oublions pas non plus que déjà l'espèce d'« annonce » du dieu Protée à sa mère enceinte²²⁴ et les circonstances merveilleuses de sa naissance (I 5; voir encore *supra*) font partie du portrait de ce qu'on a si longtemps appelé un θεῖος ἀνὴρ.

Je le répète: indépendamment du sens de θεῖος, ce portrait a une certaine cohérence, sans pour autant être fixe. Le tronc commun avec les Évangiles et les Vies de saints est évident, mais il convient aussi de souligner quelques différences par rapport au discours hagiographique chrétien en général. Il y a des chercheurs qui insistent beaucoup (j'allais dire dans le sillage des Pères de l'Église) sur l'originalité (motivation, contexte social, psychologique, existentiel, eschatologique) des miracles

²²⁰ Par ex. IV 25: prédiction de l'échec du projet de Néron de percer l'isthme de Corinthe; IV 43: prédiction d'un péril que court Néron (après un double prodige); V 7: Apollonius voit Néron s'enfuir de Grèce; V 10: la conspiration de Vindex; V 1 et 13: il prévoit l'année des trois empereurs, puis leur mort; VI,32: prédiction de la manière dont Titus mourra; VII 9: prédiction de l'avènement de Nerva; VIII 27: le règne de Nerva sera court. Toutes sortes d'autres prophéties: I 12 et 22; IV 18 et 34; VII 18; VIII 27.

²²¹ Il ôte son pied de ses fers et l'y remet, donc non pas pour s'évader tout de suite, mais pour montrer qu'il était libre quand il le voulait (sans sacrifice ou prière, même sans dire un mot).

²²² IV 10: il passe d'un instant à l'autre de Smyrne à Éphèse; VIII 10: Apollonius disparut du tribunal avant midi; dans la soirée, Démétrius et Damis le virent à Dicéarchie (Putéoli).

²²³ Cf. *supra*, note 94.

²²⁴ Où Apollonius apparaît comme une incarnation de Protée. Sur ce thème dans d'autres Vies païennes et dans les Évangiles, voir Bieler, I 1935:24–28; dans l'hagiographie chrétienne: Lanzoni 1927:225–261.

du Christ en comparaison de ceux d'Apollonius.²²⁵ Leurs arguments ne sont pas sans pertinence, mais n'enlèvent rien à l'identité primaire, c'est-à-dire la catégorie même du miracle et sa typologie dans un univers préscientifique.²²⁶ Néanmoins, globalement,²²⁷ les textes chrétiens (Évangiles, Vies) ont leurs accents propres. Eux aussi font état du don de la clairvoyance et de la prophétie, mais, proportionnellement, les gestes et les miracles caritatifs (comme la charité en tant que telle)²²⁸ ont plus de poids que chez Philostrate. La même chose vaut pour la lutte contre les forces démoniaques, les forces du Mal ou du Malin en tant qu'antagoniste de Dieu et du saint (exorcismes, mais aussi tentations et obstacles de toutes sortes).²²⁹

Si bien des vertus sont communes,²³⁰ l'humilité (allant jusqu'à l'humiliation) se trouve (depuis les Évangiles) plus haut sur l'échelle des valeurs chrétiennes. Selon Philostrate, les Grecs qui accoururent en masse vers Apollonius après qu'il eut prodigieusement échappé à Domitien, admireraient sa modestie parce qu'il ne tirait jamais argument de l'aventure pour se vanter, disant simplement qu'il avait pu présenter sa défense et qu'il avait été acquitté (VIII 15). Apollonius avait lui-même loué le naturel effacé de l'Égyptien Timasion (VI 3). Dans d'autres passages, toutefois, ses réponses et apologies accusent plutôt quelque trait un tant soit peu vaniteux (VII 34 et 36; VIII 7.2-3; VIII 19).

Pérorant toujours sur les éléments communs et les écarts, on fera remarquer que les récits chrétiens restent généralement plus près de leur sujet. Ça et là un (petit) excursus est possible, mais non pas ces longues digressions (ἐκπράσεις) géographiques, ethnographiques, zoologiques et paradoxographiques dont Philostrate nous régale,²³¹ des digressions descriptives du narrateur (y compris au second degré:

²²⁵ Par ex. Van Canghai 1982:263-277; Adinolfi 1992:49-65. Plus généralement, je renvoie aussi à Petzke 1970:237 (« die Frage... des Verhaltens..., vor allem zum sozial und moralisch deklassierten Menschen »).

²²⁶ Malgré des reproches mutuels (voir Celse, Origène): les miracles des autres sont des actes de magie, opposés aux vrais miracles de sa propre tradition. En général, voir Cotter 1999.

²²⁷ Et sans préjuger de tel ou tel texte individuel.

²²⁸ En paroles (enseignement) et en actes (oeuvres de miséricorde).

²²⁹ Les Vies païennes connaissent moins ce (semi-)dualisme. La lutte contre le Mal implique souvent aussi plus de miracles punitifs chez les chrétiens. Cf. Van Uytfanghe 1987b:102-111 (« L'action de Satan, antagoniste de Dieu et du saint »).

²³⁰ Cf. Freyburger & Pernot (éd.) 1997.

²³¹ Il est vrai que l'élément tératologique est plus développé aussi dans les Actes apocryphes des apôtres.

Damis) et digressions mises dans la bouche du héros, qui entretenait souvent ses compagnons de ce qui s'offrait à leurs yeux (V 7) ou qui commandait aux circonstances le sujet de ses colloques (VI 3). En fait, une pléthore de sujets est abordée dans la *Vita Apollonii*, d'une manière ou d'une autre : les pays et leurs habitants, leurs coutumes, leurs lois, les temples, les animaux (éléphants, lionnes, etc.), les plantes, les montagnes, les îles, les palais, les festins, les merveilles de la terre et de la mer, la navigation, la mythologie, la justice, la littérature, la peinture, la musique, etc. C'est tout autre chose que par exemple les paraboles évangéliques. Qu'on ne s'y méprenne pas pour autant : Philostrate n'a pas voulu écrire une encyclopédie, son vrai sujet étant bien Apollonius le pythagoricien, dépeint comme le philosophe qui connaît la vérité sur tous les sujets.²³² Apollonius fait beaucoup de voyages, mais, contrairement aux héros de romans, il dirige sa vie en souverain,²³³ avec l'aide des dieux bien entendu.

Dernière remarque comparative par rapport aux hagiographes chrétiens (et aux Évangiles) :²³⁴ Philostrate raisonne davantage, il argumente, rationalise, tient compte d'opinions alternatives, voire badine, avec beaucoup de « peut-être, si je ne me trompe, on dit que », etc. Il prend parfois un brin de distance,²³⁵ notamment au sujet de certains miracles ou phénomènes merveilleux, en évoquant, le cas échéant, d'éventuelles explications naturelles (III 45 : « il peut être expédient de ne pas ajouter foi à tout, mais de ne pas non plus douter de tout » ;²³⁶ IV 45 : résurrection réelle d'une jeune Romaine ou mort apparente ? ;²³⁷ VI 37 : histoire vraisemblable versus une autre qui ne l'est pas ;²³⁸ VIII 5 : c'est son régime plus léger qui permet à Apollonius de sentir le danger de la peste à Éphèse ; VIII 30 : Philostrate se contente d'énumérer les rumeurs sur la mort d'Apollonius : mort naturelle à Éphèse, « disparition » dans

²³² Voir *supra*, note 169.

²³³ Billault 1991:269.

²³⁴ Sans vouloir être exhaustif à ce propos.

²³⁵ Cf. *supra*, note 60.

²³⁶ Il s'agit de récits extraordinaires (rapportés par Damis) sur les animaux, les fontaines et les hommes de l'Inde.

²³⁷ Selon Philostrate, le problème est difficile à résoudre pour lui comme il le fut pour les assistants eux-mêmes. Apollonius, se demande-t-il, trouva-t-il en elle une dernière étincelle de vie, qui avait échappé à ceux qui la soignaient ?

²³⁸ Il s'agit de deux traditions qui se sont répandues à Sardes : l'une (digne de foi selon Apollonius) sur le Pactole, qui aurait autrefois charrié pour Crésus des paillettes ; l'autre (ridicule) sur des arbres qui sont plus anciens que la terre.

le temple d'Athéna à Lindos, « ascension », dans des circonstances merveilleuses, depuis le temple de Dictynne en Crète).²³⁹

On l'a déjà dit, la thaumaturgie d'Apollonius ne fut peut-être pas le facteur essentiel pour Philostrate, mais il ne pouvait ni ne voulait ignorer cette tradition, tout en prenant soin de l'expliquer κατὰ σοφίαν (I 2; V 11) et d'éviter tout amalgame avec la magie, à laquelle, affirme-t-il, tant de gens font appel sans être le moins du monde aidés (VII 39).²⁴⁰ Une certaine rationalisation du miraculeux, c'est rarissime dans l'hagiographie chrétienne.²⁴¹ Par contre, la relativisation (même polémique, dans certains cas) de l'importance du miracle pour la sainteté n'y est pas inconnue. Elle prend ses racines dans le Nouveau Testament et affectera toujours une veine minoritaire de l'hagiographie.²⁴² Notons qu'elle apparaît aussi chez Philostrate, là où il fait dire à Thespésion, le chef des gymnosophistes, « que la Vérité n'a besoin ni de miracles (θαυμασιουργία) ni de magie (VI 10).²⁴³

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Je ne veux pas conclure sans reconnaître que le discours hagiographique n'est pas la seule grille ou clé d'interprétation de la *Vie d'Apollonius*, qu'il y a d'autres approches et d'autres lectures de ce texte si riche. Les confronter fut d'ailleurs un des buts du colloque. On y a vu, par exemple, une défense de l'hellénisme (culture, religion, langue)²⁴⁴ dans le monde romain, d'un hellénisme absolument supérieur mais menacé (avec appel à Pythagore, le plus ancien des sages grecs).²⁴⁵ On a posé

²³⁹ Apollonius y aurait été arrêté comme magicien et comme voleur, et les gardiens du temple l'auraient chargé de chaînes. Mais il se dégagea (comme dans VII 38) pendant la nuit, les portes s'ouvrirent et on entendit alors des voix de jeunes filles qui chantaient: « Quittez la terre, allez au ciel ».

²⁴⁰ Cf. Raynor 1984:225 (les miracles d'Apollonius comme dilemme pour Philostrate et sa volonté de les subordonner à l'objectif philosophique); Anderson 1986:139 (« Philostratos was caught between two stools »); Hahn 2003:92-93; Hägg 2004:396-397: « Philostratos... rationalizes them (= the miracles) as best he can ».

²⁴¹ Par contre, les hagiographes fustigent régulièrement le doute et l'incrédulité des gens: voir Van Uytfanghe, 2000:76-80. Signalons tout de même que, vers 655, un auteur irlandais (Augustinus Hibernicus) s'intéresse à l'explication naturelle des miracles de l'Écriture: voir Simonetti 1979:225-251.

²⁴² Voir Van Uytfanghe 1981:205-233.

²⁴³ Auparavant Thespésion avait fait un prodige (en ordonnant à un arbre de saluer Apollonius) pour diminuer les Indiens dans l'esprit de son hôte, mais par la suite il relativise les miracles en évoquant Apollon de Delphes, qui rend des oracles selon sa sagesse, et sans prodiges.

²⁴⁴ Cf. I 17: l'atticisme modéré d'Apollonius.

²⁴⁵ Swain 1996:381-395; Id., 1999; voir aussi Hahn 2003:95-96 (refus de ce qui est non grec).

que la dimension politique de la *Vita Apollonii* est au moins aussi, sinon plus importante que la dimension religieuse.²⁴⁶ Cela va plus loin que, plus tard, la correspondance de saint Antoine avec les empereurs chrétiens ou que la typologie biblique du prophète qui affronte le roi dans la *Vita Martini* de Sulpice Sévère.²⁴⁷ L'Apollonius philostrateen, en effet, discute des lois, de la monarchie et de la démocratie, rencontre en Inde le roi idéal (Phraotès, qui consulte les sages), adresse un véritable « miroir du prince » à Vespasien. Sans négliger ces discussions politiques ni l'esprit panhellénique, James A. Francis, quant à lui, subordonne ces aspects à ce qu'il pense être le vrai dessein de l'auteur : « domestiquer » un philosophe ascétique réputé γόνος en faisant de lui un modèle d'idéaux classiques et un défenseur de l'ordre établi, social et culturel, de l'empire romain.²⁴⁸

Si donc mon angle de vue n'est pas le seul possible²⁴⁹ (encore que les interprétations susdites relèvent, à leur manière, du « performatif » évoqué *supra*, sous 3), il me semble indéniable que le *framework* du discours hagiographique est *aussi* suffisamment transparent à la *Vita*. C'est dans la littérature chrétienne victorieuse que ce discours connaîtra un essor spectaculaire, à la fin de l'Antiquité et au Moyen Âge. Avant, le christianisme n'en avait cependant pas le monopole (c'est ce que mes recherches pour le *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* m'ont appris),²⁵⁰ même si les Évangiles (et Philon) précèdent le premier texte païen connu.²⁵¹ En fait, ce discours s'est développé dans des traditions

²⁴⁶ Koskenniemi 1991:80–81.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Athanase, *Vita Antonii* (Bartelink 1994, 81); Sulpice, *Vita Martini* (Fontaine 1967, 20).

²⁴⁸ Francis 1995:83–129.

²⁴⁹ Par ailleurs, tout ouvrage littéraire génère des interprétations, comme le dirait Umberto Eco.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Van Uytanghe 1987a et 2001.

²⁵¹ C'est-à-dire la *Vita Apollonii*. Hanus 1998:229–231, dit avoir acquis, au fur et à mesure de l'avancement de sa recherche, la conviction qu'il existe, entre la *Vie d'Apollonius* et les premières Vies de saints chrétiens, des liens de parenté beaucoup plus étroits que ne laissent entendre la plupart des études consacrées à ce sujet (mais il oublie, à ce propos, les hypothèses allemandes du début du XX^e siècle, par ex. celles de K. Holl, H. Mertel, R. Reitzenstein). Il ne souscrit pas à l'opinion de M. Alexandre, qui oppose radicalement l'homme divin (le philosophe païen) à l'homme de Dieu (Id. 1996:63–93). Hanus veut montrer que dans la Rome impériale se constituent de nouveaux modèles de sagesse, similaires sur bien des points dans les univers chrétien et païen, parallèlement soumis aux questionnements du temps. Dans cette émergence d'une nouvelle représentation du « grand homme », dans le monde païen comme dans la sphère chrétienne, les modèles semblent devoir nécessairement emprunter des voies proches, parallèles à défaut d'être identiques. Ces remarques me paraissent judicieuses et rejoignent le constat de Graham Anderson 1986:144 : « Christian and pagan patterns

diverses, et la structure apparemment commune ne gomme pas les spécificités de chacune. Le paradoxe, dans le cas d'Apollonius, est que cette figure a survécu au triomphe du christianisme, non pas comme héros christianisé, mais comme véritable saint païen, grâce notamment à ses talismans, jusqu'en pleine époque byzantine.²⁵²

of hagiography are seen to run side by side». Ce que j'ai appelé le discours hagiographique ne fait que structurer cette parenté, au-delà de possibles interdépendances ponctuelles, au-delà aussi de la spécificité des traditions diverses. Il faudra, à l'avenir, approfondir davantage la question de l'origine et de la confluence des *ingrédients* de ce discours hagiographique.

²⁵² Sur le « culte » d'Apollonius (attesté dès la fin du II^e siècle), voir Dulière 1970:252–275; Hahn 2003:99–106.

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